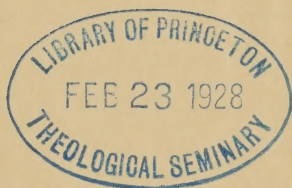


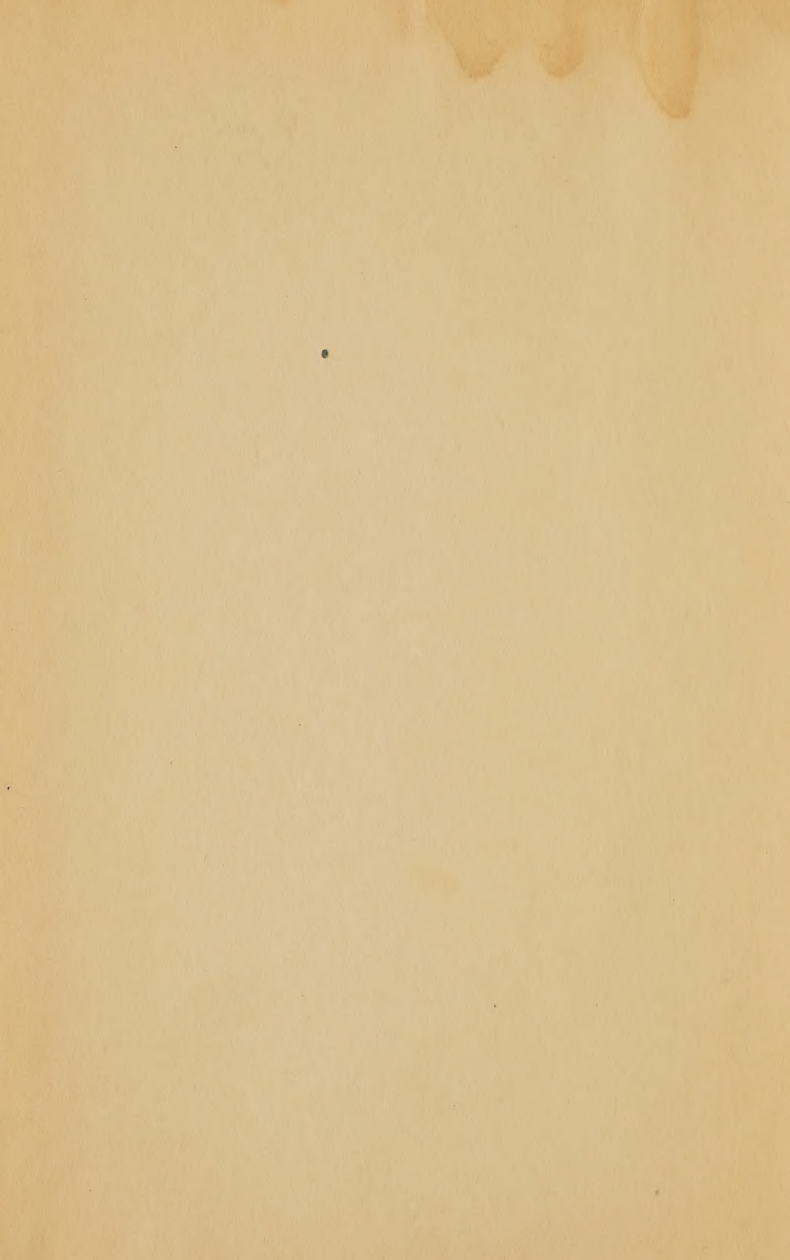
The Junior Church

Homer J. Councilor

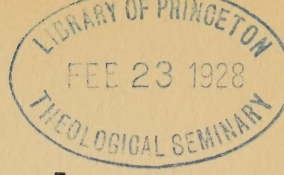




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Councilor, Homer J.
The junior church



**The
Junior Church**



The Junior Church

by
HOMER J. COUNCILOR



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TO MY WIFE

ELSIE B.

WHOSE RARE CHRISTIAN CHARACTER IS
A SOURCE OF CONSTANT INSPIRATION
AND COMFORT

PREFACE

When one is very closely related to any cause that bit of human endeavor is more than likely to assume proportions of importance to the individual thus engaged not universally recognized. By the normal processes of reasoning, it follows that when one grows sufficiently bold or rash to undertake the reduction to writing of his findings in a given field, these findings will probably be out of focus because of personal prejudice.

Recognizing the possibility of this the text in this little volume has been assiduously restricted to the bald statement of one of the most serious problems confronting the church, and a simple recital of practical methods now actually operating in its successful solution. "Not that we

have apprehended"—rather we appear to have found a promising lead.

From the constantly increasing number of delegations from all denominations, north and south, visiting our Junior Church for investigation, inspection and conference; and from the pointed inquiries of such groups it has seemed that such a technical discussion is demanded. This volume is, therefore, presented in the spirit of a great desire to assist others in cultivating the most fruitful field of opportunity we have yet known.

We hold no brief for the excellency of anything contained herein. It merely represents our best judgment, our final conclusions, the results of our experience. As such we offer it for service in the name of the Lover of Little Children.

THE AUTHOR

FOREWORD

We have entered upon a new renaissance. Everywhere within the pale of our civilization is the freshness of the early world and the activities of setting up exercises. It is an age of young people. The vision and spirit of the Bible have given us, in atmosphere, the air of Eden where they fleet the time carelessly; in government, democracy with blessings of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; in society, the elevation of woman and the emancipation of youth. It is a time of dreams and visions, the beginning we may hope of the latter days of the Messiah's kingdom, when young men shall see visions and old men dream dreams. And this too is the realization of the continuing opportunity of Christian experience, "I am

FOREWORD

come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.”

This new awakening is especially characterized by movements of young people. The voices, the fashions, the activities, and the boundless aspirations of youth challenge attention. Like the prophecy of the City of God, there are voices of children in the streets, and these experiences are ordaining strength for us all.

The beginning of this renaissance of religious living was nearly a hundred years ago. When the Sunday School movement began it was organized Bible Study for children. This was followed in the exercise and discipline of devotional life, by the rise of societies of young people in the churches, notably in the development of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. In the Biblical plan of evangelization through the churches there remained but one more advance for the spir-

itual training of young people, and that advance is the Junior Church.

Experience is more convincing than argument. Mr. Councilor's book is not primarily an argument for the Junior Church but the demonstration of it. This is not life but living, not a theory but a Christian experience. From the start it has succeeded and this book is the story of it. In Calvary Church in Washington, Homer J. Councilor and his young people have constituted a Junior Church and lifted it into the sphere of character, and have experienced the enduement of Divine approval in the vision of the face and form of the Son of Man.

WILLIAM ALLEN WILBUR

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Part I

BUILDING MATERIAL

THE JUNIOR CHURCH

CHAPTER I

"FACING THE PROBLEM"

"Oh, dear, what can the matter be, parents won't visit the school."

So ran the plaintive wail of one of the favorite songs in the old school knapsack. Very appropriately might it now be paraphrased to lament a serious and growing condition in many of our churches.

In a sense it is true that there "is nothing new under the sun," yet problems, old as the race in their varied manifestations, have a most annoying manner of demanding new solutions, and such a problem is the apparently universal lack of interest in the church services on the part of our

children and our young people. The "family pew" has almost as much claim to a place in the Great Museum of Time as the horse and buggy. At any rate, as one of our recognized institutions it has passed. The "why" of its passing we need not discuss—perhaps it is closely linked with the passing of the Family Altar and the home discussion of things religious. Perhaps there are many other reasons, but we are not now interested in that aspect of the question. The result is the same in any event, and it is the result by which we are faced, namely, the strongest link holding our children as regular attendants upon the church services has been broken and this younger generation is, on Sunday mornings, notably among those absent.

However this does not plumb the problem. It is deeper than these surface indications. Children, of this as well as former generations, may be compelled to attend

worship with their parents, with or without their consent. But children grow up, almost like mushrooms, over night, and before we know it are making their own decisions. The problem is to control these decisions even before they are made. Young people must be dealt with as such. Force is worse than useless—it is foolish.

And still we have but glimpsed the situation.

What answer can be filed to the open indictment that fully fifty per cent. of the children “born to the church” are lost to it before maturity? Can any church honestly ignore such conditions? It does not seem too much to say that this tragic failure marks at once the most challenging duty and the most colossal task of the church for this generation. What shall it profit if we flood the heathen lands with Christian literature, send missionaries without number, and lose the children entrusted to our own homes? Threadbare

and trite as the statement has grown, the membership of the churches of tomorrow is playing dolls and flying kites today.

In some manner, then, we must create and nurture a church consciousness, a habit of worship, a desire for Christian fellowship in that golden period in the lives of our boys and girls when character is taking form, if we would build intelligently for the future.

This is our problem. How shall it be accomplished?

CHAPTER II

WHAT OF THE SUNDAY SCHOOL?

The Sunday School cannot rightfully be expected to assume this burden. Already functions having no primary connection with an actual program of study have practically monopolized its attention. Although the members of the Junior, Intermediate and Senior Departments regularly devote an average of five hours a day, five days a week in exacting, secular study, only from fifteen to twenty minutes on Sunday morning are devoted to a pseudo-study period, the remainder of the hour being used to create atmosphere and to conserve the meager lesson taught, not to mention the promotion of social and kindred activities.

Serious enough is the responsibility of

teaching the Word under such circumstances without attempting to assume the added obligation of interpreting the worship service of the church for the children, or of fostering and nurturing the necessary church consciousness. The school, to justify its existence, must devote its attention with ever increasing definiteness to the teaching work. In an age of specialization such as this it is little less than criminal to play with the subject of religious education. The field of the school is peculiarly its own.

Indeed, church and school are so manifestly different in function as to occupy separate fields, each with a ministry vitally necessary in the development of Christian character. The extent of the gap between the two is evidenced by the alarming percentage of those who at the close of the school session fail to remain for the preaching hour. No accurate figures can be given since the percentage

varies under varying local stimuli, i.e., whether rural, village or city schools, the personality of the pastor, the vision of the superintendent, etc. It seems safe, however, to accept the average authorities who place the number of Sunday School members who are non-attendant upon church services at from seventy to eighty per cent. in the departments below the adult department, and from thirty-five to forty-five per cent. of that department.

In spite of this gap the work of the two can be made to coördinate splendidly. Further, from the selfish standpoint of the church, the school is invaluable and indispensable, for it is so thoroughly a demonstrated fact as to be an axiom in religious circles, that the overwhelming majority of additions to the church rolls (by conversion or profession of faith) come through the Sunday School. In this fashion the Sunday School is working in close and helpful coöperation with the

church. But, gratifying as this statement is, it only accentuates our problem, for these young Christians (new born babes in the faith) do not, to any marked degree, alter their habits as regards church attendance.

This should not be surprising. There have been no contacts to make it otherwise. A loyalty to Jesus Christ has been born or given public expression; the forms and ceremonies incident to membership in His church have been complied with; the sincere desire to live a Christian life is present, but the mental attitude of the average boy or girl toward the church service remains unaltered. They attend Sunday School and go home. Reaching the years of middle adolescence no small number of the young people on both church and Sunday School rolls slip their moorings and seek more alluring waters. If this is true of the youthful church member it is many times multiplied among the

boys and girls who have never felt the restraining influence of church membership.

Much more suggests itself in this connection but its discussion seems needless. One conclusion only appears at all reasonable, a conclusion which, by its application will go far toward leading to the light. Frankly it should be admitted that a church consciousness, a desire to participate in what we commonly know as the church service, can never be built into the lives of boys and girls through the medium of the Sunday School.

We must look *elsewhere*, and we *must* look elsewhere.

CHAPTER III

INTRODUCING THE JUNIOR CHURCH

Paradoxical as it may sound, personal attendance upon church, its worship, services, ordinances and fellowship is the secret of developing a church consciousness among our young folk. Moreover this is, in the last analysis, the only method by which it will be accomplished.

Upon first thought this would seem to bespeak a hopeless situation. With our children and young people leaving at the close of Sunday School hour in such discouraging numbers, and with the repeated failure of "compromise" church services hopefully planned to minister in part to age and in part to youth, it is not

strange if we feel a depressing sense of the impossible.

Why have we failed to interest and to hold?

The answer is to be found in the fact that we have not looked in the right direction.

It is one of many mistaken ideas harbored by some that children and young people have no interest in worship. True—they do not care for a type of worship entirely foreign to their daily life, having no point of contact with their personal experience. It is doubtful whether normal, sane adults would voluntarily sit through more than one service in Greek or Assyrian, and the average church service, music, scripture and sermon, interpreting as they do adult emotions, dealing with the problems of mature life, is certainly Greek to the typical, run of the mill, boy or girl. Viewed from this standpoint our problem is tremendously simpli-

fied. Youth is ready, even anxious to worship—as youth. Thus we are challenged to a new field of endeavor.

“If the mountain will not come to Mahomet, then Mahomet must go to the mountain”—the church must be carried to the young people.

Hence, the Junior Church!

In its charter to existence might be cited the following as desirable features found where a Junior Church functions under ideal circumstances.

First: It deals in a definite, personal way with life in its making, largely ignoring the dogmatic, the theoretic, the philosophical; emphasizing the constructive, and providing answers for the troublesome questions likely to arise in every young person's mind as life unfolds and its apparent injustice and inequalities are first experienced.

“Being forewarned, he is forearmed.”

Second: In style and length of pro-

gram it is adjusted to the age being served while still maintaining its distinctive church atmosphere and ritual.

Third: Its ministry and message employ a terminology applicable to the age in portraying life problems, human and divine relationships, etc., a thing utterly impossible in the ordinary church service, or in a sermon intended primarily to carry conviction, comfort and inspiration to an adult congregation.

Fourth: Here a church consciousness is born, the habit of church attendance formed, an appreciation of the service of the church kindled and through a simple process of unconscious promotion the members of the Junior Church, at the proper age, pass into the life of the main church to be its most loyal and intellectual supporters.

Fifth: The opportunity is furnished for simple but comprehensive training in the fundamental obligations (spiritual, social

and financial) of church membership; the reasons for and the significance of church ordinances; the missionary motive and program of the church and the duties of church officers.

Perhaps one or two negations concerning the Junior Church might not be amiss.

It is not a nursery where parents are invited to leave their children to be amused while they attend the morning church service.

It is not a story-telling hour to entertain or edify, as the case may be, boys and girls who will not attend regular church service.

It is not a place for "sacred" moving pictures, or "canned" lectures with illustrative lantern slides, helpful as these may be in their proper setting.

It is not to provide a practice pulpit for immature minds, or an organization in which the children play grown up.

It is not to be irregularly operated, as whim or caprice may dictate. It must be a vital, significant part of the local program or nothing at all.

CHAPTER IV

CONCERNING THE MECHANICS OF OPERATION

The type or form of organization best adapted to the Junior Church, while always simple, depends largely for its exact character upon the denominational affiliation of the "parent" church. If the central motive, the principal thought in entering this new field is kept constantly in mind as the objective, namely, the creating and nurturing of a church consciousness, the form of organization will, in most part, suggest itself.

Obviously there must be a pastor.

Risking what may appear facetious or presumptuous emphasis (but with no such thought in mind) the statement is

repeated. There must be *a pastor*. One man, clergyman or specially ordained layman as circumstances may determine, must assume this responsibility as his greatest opportunity for service. If the pulpit of this church is allowed to become a platform upon which different men (or women) who "would just love to talk to the dear lambs" appear each Sunday to peddle their wares, nothing but failure need be expected.

For the juniors, this is God's house, the one who leads them is His minister. They must learn to love and respect him, to look to him for spiritual leadership and to go to him freely with problems and perplexities. Such a task challenges the finest qualities in any life.

Next in the customary order of organization would come the official boards patterned after those of the senior church.

The Baptist Church with which the writer is most intimately associated will

serve as an illustration of the principle—a principle readily subject to endless adaptations.

First then, the Board of Deacons.

In the senior church the corresponding board passes upon applicants for membership to the church, safeguards the spiritual interests of the church, ministers to the needy of the congregation and generally assists the pastor in the execution of his official duties.

Similarly, in Junior Church, the deacons may be the first to receive the applicants for membership, outlining and explaining to them the meaning of the church, what will be expected of them as members and the benefits and privileges to be enjoyed through affiliation with the church. Upon this Board may be placed the responsibility of seeing that new comers are made at ease, that the church members as received are not neglected. Or, as local conditions indicate, other duties,

such as the distribution of Bibles, psalters, hymn books, carrying flowers to the sick, may be assigned to them.

Next, the Board of Trustees. Since in the adult church this board is intrusted with the responsibility for the physical property, the care and upkeep of the church, our youthful board may be charged with maintaining the proper appearance of the church, providing ushers, caring for the ventilation, keeping the doors closed at appropriate times, seeing that flowers are secured for the pulpit, and other related duties which are constantly suggesting themselves.

Upon the Treasurer and his assistant devolve the duties of taking the annual pledges for the budget; furnishing the envelopes for weekly offerings, lifting and accounting for regular Sunday morning offerings; keeping all financial records, notifying negligent subscribers of the amounts due on unpaid pledges, paying

all moneys into the adult church treasury and receiving a proper receipt therefor, approving all bills on expenditures made for the Junior Church, etc. Functioning in the capacity of Auditor for the Junior Church, the treasurer of the senior church can direct and control the technical work of this office without appearing to have more than a passing connection with its operation.

The maintaining of the church roll, the records of membership and membership accessions, losses or removals; the noting of all business transactions; the handling of official correspondence, and similar items would be included among the duties of Church Clerk. Opportunities for the Clerk to appear before the membership of the Junior Church should be provided to create a respect for the office and to serve as a recognition for the routine labor about which the general membership would know little or nothing. There

are of course, innumerable ways of accomplishing this, perhaps the simplest being by adopting the custom of calling the Clerk to the front of the church to read the names of all applicants for membership.

In addition to those already mentioned the list of officers should be continued until all those of importance called for by denominational polity have been built into the junior organization.

From time to time it will be found extremely advantageous to have a somewhat elastic organization to care for a boy or girl who should be given special recognition or provided with an outlet for some of the surplus energy of youth. After all is said and done, each Junior Church must, in the very nature of things, be custom-built to fit the locality and the folk to be served.

In all of this matter of organization, one hard and fast rule seems to apply.

Do not name a host of officers who utterly fail to function. Do not allow the idea to become a part of their religious philosophy that an office in the church is merely a nominal honor. Stress the element of the privilege of service. In some way keep constantly in the foreground the importance of each boy or girl being faithful to his especially intrusted task.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSING MEMBERSHIP

Seemingly very innocent, yet demanding the most thoughtful consideration, is the question of membership in the Junior Church. Wrongly conceived this might easily result in immeasurable harm to the parent church by reason of the erroneous conceptions given to the young folk and perhaps, through them to the parents who are not themselves church members.

If an organization is to be maintained, officers elected, business conducted and the boys and girls thus trained for service it follows of necessity that there must be a regularly constituted membership. This is so self-evident that the mere statement seems absurdly verbose. Yet in con-

sidering the organization of a Junior Church, this should be frankly recognized as the point of gravest danger, giving opportunities for the most serious mistakes possible in the entire scope of the work.

There must be a clear differentiation between "church membership" and "membership in the Junior Church."

On the surface, at first thought, this appears a most simple matter, but a very little experience discloses how confusing the use of the word "church" in both cases becomes unless it is most carefully watched. It is constantly a potential source of trouble.

"Church membership," although varying in the several denominations, is, generally speaking, indicative of one's having accepted Jesus Christ as his personal Saviour and through baptism, having entered into fellowship with His followers.

Since in the field herein under discussion, boys and girls before and during the

period of Christian decision, are to be considered and served, "membership in the Junior Church" is something very different. This difference must be clearly understood by the members of the Junior Church, otherwise the organization would defeat its own purpose, beclouding rather than helpfully directing the religious thought.

To recapitulate, membership in the Junior Church does not constitute church membership in the commonly accepted sense of the term, it does not contemplate the customary church ordinances, it does not indicate that the individual holding such membership is a Christian, it does not bestow any voting or property rights. It is rather on a parity with membership in the Sunday School, or any other auxiliary society.

Boys and girls are worshipping God here just as their elders are worshipping in the adult church. Yes! A church con-

sciousness is being formed and many Christian graces developed. Yes! But when the individual is brought to hear the call to personal discipleship, it then becomes a matter of evidencing obedience to that call through the observance of the forms and ceremonies incident to the conferring of church membership in accordance with the customs and practice of the particular denomination with which the applicant is identified, and the entering fully into fellowship with the "body of Christ."

Thus a boy or girl becomes a bona fide church member. At the same time this new disciple need not in any way alter his relationship with the Junior Church, continuing to worship there so long as it ministers to his spiritual needs. The timing of all Junior Church activities should be such that its members may participate in regular adult church ordinances.

CHAPTER VI

BUILDING THE MEMBERSHIP

Out of the training received in that old school known as "Experience" some rather fundamental rules of procedure in the matter of handling membership have been evolved and are offered, at their face value, as suggestions.

Neither membership nor attendance should in any sense be compulsory. Few things could be more harmful or deadly than this. The coöperation of parents in securing and maintaining interest is invaluable and greatly to be coveted, but not when it takes the form of compulsory attendance on the part of the second generation.

Again, membership in the Sunday

School and in the Junior Church, should in no sense be regarded as synonymous. However, the warmest spirit of coöperation should exist between the two, for no greater help can be given the Junior Church than the actual interest of departmental superintendents and class teachers in the work of creating a desire to share in its program of worship. This interest on the part of a teacher may be shown by his urging all in his class to join him in visiting the service where they will be seated in a body. Another splendid method of coöperation is the habit of making frequent reference to the Junior Church in the teaching session, and by inquiring about it with kindly interest.

Under no conditions should the Junior Church be conducted as an anti-climax to the Sunday School session.

It has been found that some form of printed application blank for recording the name and address of the applicant,

and, at the same time, laying upon him a sense of obligation growing out of such membership, is most beneficial. To be sure, the presenting of such an application should represent the free willed action of the boy or girl. In the very signing of such a card there is a stressing of the responsibility resulting from membership along the lines of personal conduct, attendance upon services, and regular support of the spiritual and financial program.

One form which has been effectively used is here reproduced:

JUNIOR CHURCH
Calvary Baptist Church
Washington, D. C.

Please enroll me as a member (active—associate) ¹ of the Junior Church. I will endeavor to be regular in my attendance at all the services, faithful in all the duties of membership,

¹The two types of membership were here used to differentiate between the boys and girls who were Christians and those who were not.

THE JUNIOR CHURCH

and will do all that I can to aid in the work of the Junior Church.

Name_____

Address_____

Date_____192

These applications may be received one or more times a month, and voted upon at the Sunday morning session of Junior Church, after the applicants have met with the Board of Deacons as heretofore mentioned. The only reason for suggesting a limited number of times each month for receipt is in the interest of the conservation of time. It will be found that minutes are very precious when only sixty are available for an entire program into which so much must be crowded.

The reception of the new members (after their applications have been recommended and voted upon) should be a very brief ceremony, lest too great importance be attached to this in the youthful mind. At the same time it may be made a very

impressive rite. Grouping the boys and girls to be received before the platform, their names may be read, and, while the entire Junior Church stands, God's blessing invoked upon the fellowship being thus formed in a short but very personal prayer.

In all of the above, the utmost care must be exercised to avoid any possible appearance of an imitation of the reception accorded new members by the church proper.

If due care is observed in matters of this character, the absence of the church ordinances in the Junior Church will serve as a further constant reminder of its limited nature. These limitations will not in the least detract from its hold upon the young people but will rather render its ministry more effective by keeping the ultimate goal of full church membership always in the foreground.

Another opportunity for training af-

forded in the Junior Church which should not be overlooked nor neglected, is in connection with the financial program. If at the beginning of the church fiscal year an amount which can reasonably be raised by a small pledge from each member be assessed by the authorities of the church proper as the proportionate share of the Junior Church in the financial program of the entire organization, the Junior Church can accept this, by action of its Board of Trustees, as its annual budget. The duty of each member to assume his share in this obligation can then be stressed and pledges taken for the year. While it is doubtful if any of the pledges will be for less than five cents a week, the amount pledged should be secondary to the real aim which should be to secure a pledge for a stated amount from every member even if it be for only one or two cents a week. The value in future years of thus forming the habit of regular, sys-

tematic giving can hardly be estimated. Suffice it to say that all the church financial problems of tomorrow, at home and abroad, would be solved were this training universal today.

CHAPTER VII

PHYSICAL INFLUENCES

One of the important factors in the successful operation of a Junior Church is that of physical equipment. Happy indeed should that church be when blessed with a second chapel or auditorium which can be used on Sunday morning exclusively for this purpose. All then can be in order at the hour of worship. Under these circumstances a spirit of reverential quiet is immediately indicated upon entering the room. This means the atmosphere of worship has already been established—those entering lend themselves to this atmosphere.

Such a condition is so ideal as seldom to exist. The ordinary situation faced involves the necessity of transforming a

room equipped and used as a Sunday School Department into the semblance of a church auditorium. Confusion and noise, with people moving in and out, belated teachers gathering up the odds and ends of class property, parents seeking children and innumerable other annoyances, all perfectly proper, yet constituting a serious problem, are the order of the day.

Discouraging, and at times disheartening as this may be, the impossible must be accomplished, for it is a principle soon learned that orderly meditations are not created by disorderly physical surroundings, a spirit of reverence is not bred in a temple of chaos, nor will a respect for God's house result from a makeshift, careless, unsatisfactory set-up.

Very little help can be given in a general, academic discussion of these handicaps. In each instance they involve the adjustment of local conditions, the edu-

cation or elimination of certain personalities, and even at times minor alterations in the permanent physical equipment of the buildings themselves.

It is universally true, however, that where a Sunday School room must be used for Junior Church, the superintendent of that department can greatly assist in producing a church-like appearance by having as much of the paraphernalia of the department as possible held at the rear of the room, and, further, by having all blackboards, charts, maps and similar material removed from view and stored before the closing of the Sunday School session.

Coöperation in these seemingly incidental and inconsequential details will be found to contribute in large measure to the constructive building of a Junior Church that is to endure.

Physical surroundings must not be ignored.

CHAPTER VIII

HINTS ON ORGANIZATION

Proverbs from beyond the memory of man have asserted in one form or another that much of the ultimate success of any enterprise depends upon its proper launching. An auspicious beginning makes for a long and successful career.

This is splendid philosophy. But when one essays accomplishing this very thing he soon discovers that it is infinitely easier to philosophize about perfection than to produce it.

To propose the stating of any rule-of-thumb procedure by which all perplexing difficulties will vanish is to seek the pot of gold at the rainbow's end. Years of plodding, however, have led to certain methods likely to prove effective in supplying

the saving impetus as well as securing the coöperation and the moral support so necessary.

No thing is more important than the understanding, intelligent support of those composing the official boards of the adult church. The voluntary endorsement, or even more, the active participation on the part of the members of these boards can be secured only through a thorough knowledge of the need, the aims, the plans and the purposes to be served by the Junior Church. Particularly it is suggested that no question should be allowed to exist in their minds as to the work to be undertaken and the exact relationship the new organization is to bear to the church.

Next in order of natural routine would seem to be the selection of the leader or pastor (the designation of this office is a local matter of minor importance) for the Junior Church. A man of appreciation

and understanding is most necessary. One without a natural attractiveness for children, one who is not drawn instinctively toward boys and girls, will find himself laboring under an almost insurmountable handicap.

Following this, if all members of the school, from nine to sixteen years of age, are gathered in a general assembly an ideal opportunity is afforded for the enthusiastic presentation of the perfected plan. Every detail should be explained and elaborated upon. Stress should be laid upon the fact that the organization will be "by, for and of" this youthful group, naming a Sunday in the near future upon which the experiment will be started. Bring all possible pressure to bear in placing the responsibility upon all within the group to be present at the opening service, emphasizing the honor of charter membership in any organization.

Each child might then be furnished with a printed folder descriptive of the plans already outlined, and asked to present this to his parents for their information. In this pamphlet, in addition to an interesting discussion of the project, should be an earnest plea for the coöperation of the parents in arranging family engagements after a fashion permitting the children to participate in this worship service.

Upon the designated Sunday, preferably the next, the actual working organization may be effected, officers elected and installed, duties assigned, and the date of closing the roll of charter members announced.

It will be found that a definite—constantly posted—roll of members is imperatively needed for routine operation. This will also be found to be invaluable in maintaining regular attendance, providing material from which to select of-

ficers and insuring the success of the plans for special training. To secure such a roll, the stressing of the idea of charter members will be found most helpful, as will also the simple ceremony of reception to new members already discussed.

CHAPTER IX

PLANNING FOR WORSHIP

To discuss in detail the various orders of service which may be profitably selected for the Sunday morning hour would be a bit boresome and probably equally unsatisfactory. The choice of a pleasing and satisfactory order of service is largely a matter of taste based upon denominational tradition and carrying out as nearly as possible the customs of the individual church in point.

There are, of course, certain controlling factors to be recognized and dealt with in formulating any program for a particular group. In analyzing some of the features of the following simple form (used with gratifying results) these pri-

BUILDING MATERIAL

mary principles will perhaps emphasize their own relative importance.

PRELUDE

DOXOLOGY OR CALL TO WORSHIP SUNG

(*All standing*)

INVOCATION, CLOSING WITH LORD'S

PRAYER IN UNISON (*All standing*)

HYMN

DEVOTIONAL READING (*Responsive*)

HYMN (*All standing*)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

BUSINESS, ETC.

OFFERING

SPECIAL MUSIC (*Children's Chorus*)

SCRIPTURE LESSON

PRAYER

HYMN (*two verses. All standing*)

SERMON

HYMN (*All standing*)

BENEDICTION

It will be noted that six times during this hour the boys and girls are called upon to stand. This is very beneficial for obvious reasons. If this or some similar means of exhausting surplus energy is judiciously used no trouble will be experienced in demanding and securing absolute quiet and reverent attention during the other portions of the service.

Unlike the field of the expressional in which variety of form is the greatest asset, the program of worship in Junior Church, while subject to certain alterations from time to time, should be conducted from week to week with dignity and exactness according to the chosen ritual, never seeking to emphasize the unique, the unusual or the surprising, but rather emphasizing the eternal principles of God's continuing, unchanging presence, a solid, stabilizing influence by virtue of its very atmosphere.

Respect on the part of every member

is demanded by an established, dignified order of service. Moreover, it is one of those subtle, unconscious influences creating mental and spiritual reflexes destined throughout life to control many automatic reactions, not only in the realm of the religious but in every other department of life.

Quite to the contrary, a careless, cheap, superficial handling of these details loads the young life with an added burden of liability. Reflexes thus formed are of little or no assistance in meeting the pressure and stress of the every-day battle.

Referring again to the suggested program, attention is invited to the fact that the entire congregation is expected to participate continuously save for one special musical selection (preferably rendered by those of their own number) the Scripture lesson, prayer and the sermon. Certainly this is a wise application of sound psychology. The boy or girl is learning by

doing, is forming the habit of worship supported by a consciousness of ownership, for these Juniors most emphatically feel that the service belongs entirely to them. Further (descending to the basely practical), their minds are temporarily fully occupied by their share in the order of the day.

Music occupies a large place in all worship. Its educational value should not be overlooked here. Too much emphasis can hardly be placed on the results to be realized in creating the church atmosphere so greatly to be desired through the use of "hymns" for the congregational singing, rather than the popular religious "songs" almost universally used in the Sunday Schools, young people's societies and many times for evening church services. This latter type of song has a wide and useful field, but that field does not include the serious task of building a deep and broad and enduring church consciousness.

To be sure, the theme of the hour, the language of the hymn as it relates itself to the possible understanding and personal religious experience of the members of the Junior Church, and the tempo of the music should all be considered.

For the special music, a children's choir is most strongly recommended. This serves many useful purposes. It adds a charm to the service. Children are always interested in the accomplishments of those of their own age. It initiates many into the realm of service. It cultivates and trains the voices of those comprising the choir and assures a splendid leadership for all the singing. Aside from the work in the Junior Church, such an organization will be found to be of inestimable value in many other branches of the church for the rendition of both sacred and secular members upon a host of occasions suggesting themselves at once to the trained worker.

The entire order of service including

the sermon (more fully discussed in Part II) should not exceed one hour in length. This rule of procedure should be adhered to without deviation, for reasons at once apparent.

“And finally brethren——”

The pulpit of the Junior Church should be even more closely guarded than that of the adult church against the religious crank, the biased man riding a hobby, the professional exploiter and the unscrupulous emotionalist.

CHAPTER X

MINOR DETAILS

Two queries thus far propounded by every investigator in the field of the Junior Church are:

I. What regulations should obtain as to the promotion from the Junior to the Adult Church?

II. What attitude should be maintained toward adults frequenting the Junior Church services?

The answers are extremely simple.

To the first: By letting it be generally understood that the ages of the members in Junior Church are from nine to sixteen, and by keeping the officers of the church within these ages, the matter of promotion cares for itself without any official action. When boys or girls pass the

age limit they begin to divide their interest between the Junior and the Adult Church, trying the new—still holding to the old. Less and less they are seen in the Junior Church, more and more in the adult service—then altogether they take their place with the older group.

To the second: So long as the adults attending Junior Church do not represent any large proportion of the congregation, they are an asset to the service. If they accompany their children and share in the worship this serves as a silent tribute to the work. One rule only need be observed, namely, these adults must be considered always as visitors, the services should never be altered to minister particularly to them. As in the matter of promotion this will be found to be self-regulating and need be given no serious consideration.

Part II

A HANDFUL OF SEED

SERMONS FOR JUNIOR CHURCH

Preaching successfully to children is a task. Many a man who has prided himself upon having stepped "down" from his normal sphere of dignity and easily delivered himself of a telling sermon to a Junior Church group would be extremely annoyed if he but knew that his sermon had gone unheard, the rapt attention accorded him being due to the intense interest on the part of the children in the way his ears wiggled whenever he frowned to emphasize a point.

Preaching successfully to children is a far more serious task than preaching to their parents. The parents have learned to take the punishment of a dull sermon, to sit patiently waiting for the welcomed

“finally brethren,” but not so with young America. If you do not demand his attention he will demand yours. A weak, apologetic offering, voicing pious platitudes, lacking the convincing background of a sincere personal belief is doomed to utter failure. Lack of honest preparation will find an immediate response in the manner in which the message is received.

Experience has shown that even the most profound truth can be made the subject of a Junior Church sermon provided the theme has been logically thought through so that the process of reasoning follows naturally without strain, and the language used by the speaker is within the intellectual reach of the audience.

A few weeks' work of this character with children usually serves as a revelation of the power in expression, the forcefulness and exactness in description, the clearness in argument of the familiar

Anglo-Saxon words found in the vocabulary of every boy and girl. Using such terminology in speaking is something very different from swinging over to the far extreme and descending to the use of "sweet," "pretty" words and phrases such as might have a place in radio bed-time stories.

One of the never failing sources of satisfaction in this field of endeavor is found in the quick, personal applications the young folk make of the sermon material, especially when the thought has dealt with matters coming within the scope of their own personal experience.

In the following pages are outlined a number of Junior Church sermons, giving in some detail the principal illustration in each case. The chief recommendation for the consideration of these lies in the fact that they have been most satisfying to the writer in seeking to make his message live—a fact certified to by the

frequent reference of young people and parents to the subject matter, as later discussed at home or elsewhere.

The hymns suggested as appropriate for the themes under discussion in the following pages have been selected by the Organist and Director of Music of Calvary Baptist Church, Washington, D.C., Mr. Thomas Moss, whose interest in young people and appreciative understanding of their needs is well known. The author gratefully acknowledges his personal indebtedness to Mr. Moss.

SHADOWS WORTH WHILE

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalms 27:1-6.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Acts 5:12-16.

TEXT: "That, as Peter came by, at the least his shadow might overshadow some one of them." Acts 5:15.

THEME: The value of our shadow depends upon what we are.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Frequently I am called on to speak at an Industrial Home where several hundred boys who have failed in self control are being educated under government supervision that they may find themselves, and thus develop into useful and worth-while citizens. One portion of the service never fails to impress me deeply, for, in a sense, it is nothing at all, yet, it is

everything. When the hour is finished, the hymns sung, the lesson read, the sermon preached and the benediction pronounced, the Superintendent of this school steps to the front of the platform and stands, his heels together, his body erect, his shoulders well back and his head splendidly poised. For a moment he looks over the room full of boys, then with a nod of his head signals the organist who strikes the first notes of a march. Having given this signal the superintendent again turns his gaze upon the boys. Section by section, as the group leader gives the order, the boys snap out of their chairs to their feet, their eyes fixed upon the solitary figure of the superintendent. Instinctively, entirely without consciousness on their part, their heels click together, their shoulders square up, their heads are held high, as catching the cadence of the music they march from the hall. And thus the picture holds until the last boy has crossed the

threshold leading out of doors. Not a word has been spoken, but the shadow of that superintendent has wonderfully fallen over the lives of these boys, giving them a new courage, a new faith in themselves, a new sense of the fitness of things.

Some years ago the National Convention of the great Democratic party met in the city of Baltimore. As is usual in such conventions, there were men from every part of the country, each with his own personal ambitions, and each seeking to push forward his candidate for the nomination for the presidency of the United States. It is not strange that very soon everything was in a most deplorable state of confusion, men were becoming angry and the presiding officer found it impossible to maintain order. Sitting in the visitors' gallery we wondered what would be the outcome of all the shouting and the wrangling, when we heard the

familiar sound of the brakes of a taxi-cab drawing up outside the main entrance. A moment later the doors swung open and the jostling men moved aside to admit William Jennings Bryan. Followed by a handful of men he made his way rapidly toward the platform. As he passed down the aisle silence fell where pandemonium had reigned but a moment before, and as this Christian statesman mounted the platform the surging sea of humanity settled quietly in their seats.

The shadow of one of God's leaders had fallen over them.

A few months ago, one of the boys of our Chinese Sunday School, who had accepted Jesus as his Saviour and Guide, returned to China on a visit of some weeks. When he was again in this country, back at his regular work and once more in our Sunday School, we inquired as to the outcome of his visit, with all the

usual questions about loved ones, the sea voyage and all the rest. Then someone asked him, "Were you able to do much for Jesus while you were home?" His answer is one that in its very simplicity is a challenge to everyone of us. "No," he replied, "I did not have much chance to do anything for Jesus, but everybody knew I was a Christian." There in his own village, whether in the shelter of his own home, on the busy street, in the shops, wherever he might be, "everybody knew that he was a Christian."

The shadow of the life dedicated to the Master. What more could you or I desire than that our lives might cast such a shadow.

The Scripture story of Peter's shadow

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Every one has (I) a shadow physically, and (II) a shadow of influence.

2. We add to or detract from every life we touch.

3. We exert our greatest influence when we are thinking least about it.

4. Our Father expects us to exert an influence for good for Him by carrying His love in our hearts as we go about our daily routine of work and play.

5. The shadow of your life depends upon what you are. What sort of shadow is it?

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Soldiers of Christ, Arise”

“Yield Not to Temptation”

“Courage, Brother, Do Not Stumble”

“Awake, My Soul, Stretch Every Nerve”

FOUNDATIONS

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 93.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Luke 6: 46-49.

TEXT: "A wise man . . . built his house upon the rock." Matthew 7: 24.

THEME: Every life (I) to achieve, or (II) to endure, must be rightly founded (III) upon Jesus Christ.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

When first I went down to the great Southwest to live, some years ago, I met a man with whom I became very intimate. One day he said to me, "I am going to build a house. The workmen will be there today. Don't you want to go over and see them get started?" Of course, I was glad to have this opportunity and together we went to the vacant lot where we found several piles of lumber, four or five car-

penters in their white overalls, and two colored men who were making some small piles of stone about eighteen inches square and perhaps three feet high. These men were placing the stones directly upon the ground with a bit of mortar between them, and thus building up the piles. Presently when six of these placed in regular intervals around a square were completed the men cleaned their tools, packed them away in a box, and left. My friend, who had been busy here and there, came back near where I was standing and turning to him I asked, "What are these funny little warts of stone?"

"Oh," he said, "that is the foundation for the house."

I was so surprised at first that I did not believe him.

"How are you going to build a house on such a weak foundation as that?" I asked him.

"It isn't going to be a very big house,"

he answered, "and if you do not build a large house you do not need a strong foundation."

The very first piece of building I ever had a hand in was the building of a dog kennel. A small sized dry-goods box, a few nails, an old shoe from which to cut the leather to make hinges for the door, and in a few hours we had a splendid dog kennel. It did not have any foundation. We could take it by the handle and move it from place to place about the yard. It was only a dog kennel. We put it alongside the slant-roofed chicken coop, and they were a suitable pair.

If all you plan on building is a chicken coop or a dog kennel you do not need a foundation.

The other day I was called to New York on business, and during the day dropped into the office of a friend. While

waiting for him to finish a conference, I amused myself by looking across the street where the Madison Square Garden had once stood. The old building had been entirely removed and an army of men with every sort of machinery were engaged in excavating for the basement of a new building. They would drill into the solid rock, load these holes with dynamite, cover them with huge steel mats (that no pieces of rock should fly and hurt any one) and at a given signal explode the dynamite, loosening the rock beneath the mats. Next the steam shovels would dig into the loosened stone, and large motor trucks would carry it away. When my friend at last joined me I inquired as to what was to be built there. He told me a new office building forty or fifty stories high was planned.

“My!” I exclaimed, “It does not seem possible that men can build such skyscrapers.”

He laughed and answered, "You could build up forever on a solid rock foundation like that. There's nothing to stop you. Your only limit is the limit you choose to make for yourself."

Scripture story of the two houses built respectively upon the rock and upon the sand.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. A character to endure must stand upon a foundation that will endure.

2. We do not want a character that cannot stand winds of adversity—storms of temptation.

3. We can build a "great life" only on a broad, secure, adequate foundation.

4. Sometimes men attempt to build on other foundations but when the hour of pressure comes the superstructure falls in ruins.

This is true whether you are building a

career—literary, musical, professional—or building a character.

5. The life built upon the Christ foundation has no limits.

“For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” I Corinthians 3:11.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“How Firm a Foundation”

“In the Hour of Trial”

“Fight the Good Fight with All Thy
Might”

“I Need Thee Every Hour”

THE SONG WITHIN

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 23.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Luke 12: 22-32.

TEXT: "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Luke 12: 15.

THEME: Even very young folk may have a vital part in making the world happier if they have the right spirit.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Not so long ago I boarded the train one day and we followed the tracks down into our beautiful Southland until we came to the mountains of Georgia. When we reached the highest part of these mountains I left the train and was driven by some friends to a school not so far away where several hundred young folk

had gathered for a conference. Those in charge of the conference gave me a room in a home at the very top of one of the hills. This splendid house had a spacious front porch, and one morning, while I was sitting alone on this porch, looking out over the surrounding valley with its rare beauty of green and red and all the many other colors you see in a mid-summer landscape, the maid brought a bird cage out and hung it in its standard. Inside the cage was a little yellow canary. He hopped over, and, taking hold the bars of his cage, pushed his head just as far out as he could, looking up at the clear, inviting, blue sky, and at the trees, whose leaves were rustling a constant invitation to come and play with them, and at the cool water of the stream winding its way among the rocks below. First at one side of the cage and then at the other he would push his head through. How cruel it seemed to be shut in by those bars of

wire, bound so closely about him that he could not even fly. As I watched him, I said to myself, "Poor birdie, you do not have what other birds have. You can't do what they are doing. You must be most unhappy to be all shut in like that."

As I was thinking this all to myself, he jumped back to his perch, lifted his head high, opened his beak and poured forth the most beautiful song I have ever heard. It filled the porch, it echoed down the hill-side, it floated off into space. On and on he sang. You could hardly believe that one little bird could make so much wonderful music. As I listened, I said again to myself, "After all the cage didn't count. He has the song in his heart and must sing. There are many things he can not have, and can not do, but he makes all the world happier because he gives us the song that is in his heart." I shall never forget that canary bird and how he thrilled my heart.

The story of the life of the Babe of Bethlehem—a life of most rigorous limitations, the poverty, the large family, the widowed mother, the work shop—illustrates how minor in importance externals are. The song that was in the heart of this Carpenter of Nazareth has echoed around the world, giving inspiration, awakening hope, bringing comfort, and transforming lives through the centuries.

No one ever wants to be put in jail. Yet being in jail need not stop one from doing all he can to make the world better. Surely it is a terrible thing to be shut in behind iron bars, and, if we were, most of us would say immediately that we were helpless to do anything to make people happier or better. But, it was while he was in prison that John Bunyan wrote his marvelous *Pilgrim's Progress*, which has come to be recognized as the finest work of its character in all English literature.

John Bunyan was only the son of the village tinker. He was denied the privileges of a real education, he had but a few books to read, he was very poor, but he had a song in his heart, and since he sang this all the world has stopped to listen. We never think now to ask what sort of clothes John had to wear, whether he had everything all the other boys had, whether he was physically handsome or not. We remembered him by his song, and that is what counts.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Externals are not of first importance—clothes, house, physical appearance.

2. Environment is not of first importance. One may be “caged in” by limitations beyond his power to change without allowing this to spoil his life.

3. The fact that boys and girls are young and small does not mean they cannot do great things. The canary was

smaller than they. His song has become a permanent part of the happiness in the lives of all who heard him.

4. If we keep the sun shining within our hearts, it will shine in the world all around us.

5. The world's most radiant lives have been those with limitations.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Lord, Speak to Me, that I May Speak”

“Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus”

“There's a Wideness in God's Mercy”

“The Church's One Foundation”

WRITTEN IN THE BOOK

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 90.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Job 19:13-24.

TEXT: "And another book was opened which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of the things which were written in the books." Revelation 20:12.

THEME: (I) The necessity of doing the right thing, the generous, the kind, the thoughtful thing day by day; (II) the importance of each deed, good or bad.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

"I have brought you something you may find interesting," said the young lady who had come to my study.

Opening her rather large purse she

drew from within one of its many compartments, a small, red book, showing every evidence of both age and hard usage.

“In going through my father’s effects, we found this memorandum book and thought perhaps you would prize it,” she continued.

Wondering somewhat why I should prize a little, old, worn book, I nevertheless took it and thanked her for her thoughtfulness. Upon examining it I discovered that it was a record of what years ago had been a mission Sunday School fostered by our church. Then indeed I found it interesting. After my visitor had gone I continued to thumb through the pages and in the course of my reading I came upon this entry: “May 24, 1885 . . . Weather cloudy. Superintendent and Assistant Superintendent both absent. Service conducted by Brother J——.” Then followed some details of business and at the bottom of the page

were these words: "Had a pleasant time."

The next Sunday I met Mr. J—— in the foyer of the church and with such dignity as I could command inquired of him: "What were you doing on May 24, 1885?"

Very naturally he thought I was joking and gave some facetious reply. Ignoring his humorous remark, I continued in my original tone: "You must recall that May 24, 1885, was a disagreeable day, cloudy and dark. Don't you remember on that day you went out of your way to make people happy?" By this time he was completely bewildered. "On that day Mr. J——, the superintendent and assistant superintendent of our mission school both failed to appear for duty and you willingly took their work upon yourself and in spite of the dark and gloomy day radiated sunshine so about you that everyone had a most pleasant time, and went away to their homes ready to pass this sunshine on to others."

“What are you talking about? How do you know so much about that day?” he demanded.

“I know all about it,” I replied, “because it is written in the book.” And I drew the dilapidated, broken-backed, little red book from my pocket.

After having been away from the town of my birth for a score of years, I was privileged to return there for a few hours between trains. It was summer time, and in wandering over some of the familiar ground of my childhood, I found myself near the empty high school building. With a little persuasion, the janitor loaned me the key to the building and gave permission to walk through its empty rooms and halls so alive with memories for me. Reaching the assembly room I was seized with a great desire to sit once more at my old desk. Going to the part of the room where this desk had been years before I

soon found it and seated myself as I had done so many, many times as a boy. Probably you are asking yourself how I knew it was my old desk. That was very simple. Just below the little iron cover to the ink well were the initials I had carved in that desk when it was mine. It was a part of my school record living on after I had gone.

Before leaving the building I stopped to look at the book of records in which the permanent grades of all the pupils are kept. Turning back the pages I found my own name and the grades I had earned. Some of these were pleasing, but among them I found one figure in red ink, which signified that in that particular subject I had failed to pass. It was written in the book. I had put it upon the page by my own failure to apply myself and so long as the record stands, a hundred years from now or more, those who turn to that page will see that red mark. I did not

like to see that record, it did not please me at all, but nothing I could do now would ever change it. I did it—no one else. It is the record I made, and so long as I live I must know that it stands against me. It is written in the book.

Just outside Atlanta, Georgia, where God planted a great, baldfaced mountain of marble, a most remarkable piece of work is being undertaken. High up on the face of this mountain men are working with drills, and mallets, and chisels carving deep into the marble a gigantic relief of General Robert E. Lee and his staff. When it shall have been completed it will be visible for miles, and those directing the work tell us, five thousand years from now it will be just as clearly seen.

What a splendid record to leave, written on the mountain side for the ages to read.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. We write a bit of the page each day.
2. Our record is written by our own hand.
3. We cannot erase once we have written, therefore we should write most carefully.
4. Failure or success, kindness or selfishness, etc., stand as written.
5. Only once to write—today.
6. Best to write that of which we shall not be ashamed.
7. After Stone Mountain with its magnificent relief is dust, the influence of what we write will continue.
8. We write our record also on the hearts of those around us.

“Long, long afterward, in an oak
I found the arrow, still unbroke;
And the song, from beginning to end,
I found again in the heart of a friend.”

LONGFELLOW.

9. We write also in our own Book of Memory.

“When Time who steals our years away
Shall steal our pleasures too
The mem’ry of the past will stay.”

THOMAS MOORE.

10. Others may not know what we write, but we know and our Father knows.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Rejoice, Ye Pure in Heart”

“With Happy Voices Singing”

“O Jesus, I Have Promised”

“Oft in Danger, Oft in Woe”

LANDMARKS

DEVOTIONAL READING: Matthew 5:1–12.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 5:13–16.

TEXT: “Let your light shine.” Matthew
5:16.

THEME: Our individual responsibility to
those about us.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

We were camped on a wild stretch of beach, far removed from all human habitation. On this particular occasion it was necessary that some one stand watch during the entire night, keeping the camp-fire stocked with fuel and maintaining a general supervision. By rare good fortune, when lots were cast the watch fell to me. Twilight deepened rapidly into darkness.

The other members of the party, weary from the day's arduous activities, were soon rolled in their blankets, asleep under the stars. Seated on a log by the fire, listening to the muffled boom of the breakers my attention was caught by a finger of light sweeping over the dunes and passing out to sea. I knew the lamps in the lighthouse, a mile away across the inlet, had been lighted. Ten seconds later another finger traced its way as the first had done over the rolling, grass-topped hills of sand and lost itself out over the black water of the ocean. Thus all the night long at regular intervals the light came and went. As I sat alone I thought of what this old lighthouse meant to those who went down to the sea in ships. For forty miles the light was visible over the water. In fair weather and foul it stands sending its messages of comfort and warning to all who follow the sea. Tall and straight it stands, a mighty beacon upon which men may stake their

all when the storms beset them like wild beasts seeking for their lives. During the still, thoughtful watches of that night I learned to love this light for its constancy, for its unwavering dependability, for its absolute regularity and for its clear white rays. I loved it because it let its light shine over me.

But there are places where a light-house cannot be built, yet places where a warning signal is very much needed. Sometimes to meet this situation the government has anchored boats known as light-ships at strategic points along the coast. Here they ride the waves and the tides, and although their light does not shine as far as that of a great light-house they do their part in preventing ships from losing their course, warning them of any danger, and thus saving them from needlessly wrecking themselves on rocks or shoals. Their full duty is to stand anchored, and ride

true in their place while they let their light shine.

At other times it is not necessary to have a light, but some sort of marker is necessary to tell of a treacherous bar. To provide for such an emergency whistling buoys are set. These are so constructed that as the waves rock them to and fro, the air rushing through a clever mechanical device causes a shrill whistle. In this fashion they whistle out their message to those who approach too close.

Then again, there are the channel buoys, marking out the deep water of the channel through which sea craft, large and small, may make the harbor in safety. These are not at all pretentious. Some are merely logs, shaped uniformly and painted a distinctive color so they may be easily picked up by the lookout. Anchored in their modest place of service they are

saying day and night, "This is the true channel to the harbor! This is the safe channel to the harbor! Take your course from me!"

If when the storms blow, these channel buoys, proving false to their trust, should drift away from their moorings (even though they are not great like the light-house or the light-ship) they might easily cause many a huge liner to sink by leading it off the true course. How tremendously important that these little markers be true to their trust!

DEDUCTIONS:

1. We do not live nor die to ourselves.
2. We take our bearings from the lives of others.
3. Others are taking their course from us.
4. There are people depending upon us to keep them in the channel of happiness and usefulness.

5. We may not be a great light house, but the little channel buoy is of tremendous importance—great ships may entirely miss the harbor if the channel buoys are wrong.

6. Helping the Great Light Keeper to make the channel to the harbor easy to find and to follow is our task supreme.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty”

“Brightly Beams Our Father’s Mercy”

“Watchman, Tell Us of the Night”

“Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand”

DRIVING POWER

DEVOTIONAL READING: Proverbs 4:20-27.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Proverbs 23:1-7.

TEXT: "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Proverbs 23:7.

THEME: Our success in life, the measure to which we overcome and achieve, depends upon the inner life.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Last summer, with a group of friends, I crossed the Atlantic on the U.S.S. Leviathan. Never shall I forget how, as it lay at the New York wharves, it loomed above the street level like a huge skyscraper; nor how, when once on board, we found that even the most glowing description of its comforts and luxurious beauty were not in the least exaggerated. In the eve-

nings, as we lounged in the great easy chairs before the open fire in the main saloon, it was hard to believe we were actually hundreds of miles from land, out in mid-ocean plowing away at a terrific rate toward the other world. It would have been much easier to believe we were in some palatial home. Then too we could not but marvel at the service in the dining room, the many elevators, the swimming pool, the perfect appointments of every description.

About us were the officers in their spotless uniforms, spick and span, from the radio messenger boy to the captain. These officers insisted that everything be in perfect order. Every day the brass rails were polished until you could use them for mirrors, the decks were under the constant supervision of the eagle-eyed stewards.

All of this was very lovely, we appreciated everything very much, but nothing I have mentioned furnished the power

by which we were being driven toward our destination. With all of its handsome appointments, the Leviathan would never have left the docks at New York had there not been something else to the ship which most of the passengers never saw, a something that furnished the tremendous driving power to make this gigantic floating palace race through the water hour after hour, while the passengers laughed and sang and danced and paced the decks. It is about this something I wish to tell you.

Through the courtesy of the Chief Engineer, we one day took the elevator and went down, down, down into the depths of the hold. Our first stop was thirty or more feet below the water line. Here we reached the control board where all the instruments controlling the action of the ship are found. The Captain from the bridge, a dozen stories above, can instantly communicate his orders to this board where the ever alert officer on duty as in-

stantly places them in effect. Still this was not the power—it was the manner in which the power was controlled.

Down another flight of iron steps we went. Here we found the great boilers burning a thousand tons of oil a day. Here we saw the eight massive turbines transmitting the power to the propeller shafts. These mighty shafts, more than 200 feet in length of solid steel, turning in their greasy bearings day and night without ceasing, reached out through the heavy iron housings to the propellers hidden deep in the water. This was the driving power.

Far below the rich, luxurious cabins and saloons and the white polished decks, down in the very depths of this ocean liner we found the driving power. When the sun played on the water and the air was balmy and warm, or when the clouds came and the storm raged, in good or bad weather, in smooth seas or rough, this

power drove on and on. If anything had happened to this power plant the mighty liner would have been helplessly at the mercy of the elements. So long as all was well here, the captain and the passengers alike could laugh at these same elements.

This was the driving power.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Outward adornments are nice but not necessary.

2. Externals do not determine the power of a life.

3. The life that counts is the one with the inner power to drive ahead in all sorts of weather, fair or foul.

4. Storms will come into every life. Our ability to meet these storms depends upon the drive of our lives.

5. The storehouse of human power is the heart.

6. The battles of life for good or evil are fought out in the heart.

“To think aright is to believe aright, to believe aright is to live aright.”

ANON.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“When Morning Gilds the Skies”

“Purer Yet and Purer”

“True-Hearted, Whole-Hearted, Faithful and Loyal”

“From Glory Unto Glory”

LEFT FOOT FIRST

DEVOTIONAL READINGS: Psalm 24.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 6:19-34.

TEXT: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God
and His righteousness." Matthew
6:33.

THEME: Getting the right start to insure
the achieving of our desired goal in
life.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Way out West where the Rocky Mountains push their heads high above the clouds, there is an old barn sitting on the crest of one of the lower hills. One day as it was raining, two tiny rain drops came down from the sky and sat side by side on the uppermost edge of the ridge board of this rickety old barn. After they had rested beside each other for a few mo-

ments, one said to the other: "I'm going to slide down this side of the barn. Come along with me."

The other little drop took a look at that side of the roof and answered, "No, I don't like that side. I'm going to slide down the other side."

So they parted. The first drop let go his hold on the ridge board and down the slippery roof he went. At the very edge he hesitated for just a moment, and then, down he jumped, into a puddle of water. Here he was joined by many other drops and soon they started on a short investigation trip down the hill. Presently they found a laughing spring, and joining that merry stream shortly came to a broad river. This river carried them along to a great bay, and before they had become entirely familiar with their surroundings in the bay they found themselves drifting out into the salty waters of the Pacific Ocean.

In the meantime, the second little drop that had been seated on the ridge board, had scooted down the other side of the barn, and after many thrilling adventures, meeting other drops and journeying with them, he too found himself being swept along by the swift current of a mighty river, out into a gulf so immense that it seemed as though all the world must be covered with water. But he did not stop here, and one morning, as the sun was climbing out of the east, he woke to find himself in the Atlantic Ocean.

How close together were the rain drops on the ridge board. How far apart when their journey ended. The old barn stood on the crest of the great divide, the drops each chose to go in an opposite direction and in the end a whole continent divided them.

Standing at the edge of the parade grounds, I was watching a drill sergeant

take a squad of raw recruits in hand for their first bit of training. "I'm going to teach you to march today," he had announced. Dressing them in a straight line, he ordered them to throw their heads up and assume a soldierly bearing. "Now," he said, "remember that in marching it all depends on how you get off to the start. Left foot first always. Remember! Mark time! One! Two! Three! Four! One! two! Three! Four! March!"

They had not taken more than a step or two before he shouted his order to "Halt!"

"Hey, you, number three, there, what did I tell you? Don't you know your left foot? Left foot first! If you are ever going to be a soldier you'll have to start right. Now, again!"

Over and over the drill they went, and as I left the grounds these words rang in my ears, "Left foot first, left foot first!"

In aiming a gun, you may move the end of the barrel only the smallest fraction of an inch, almost imperceptibly, but it makes all the difference between hitting the bulls-eye and missing the target entirely when the bullet reaches its mark at the other end of the range.

The bullet may travel with terrific force and speed but if the aim is imperfect the shot will go wild.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Things that are but slightly different in the beginning may be exceedingly different before they end.

2. Not how fast we go, but the direction we take is what counts.

3. Erroneous conceptions of the values of life produce unsatisfying lives.

4. God in His Book helps us to find our way—map out our course.

5. The Creator who gave us life, tells

us the secret of lasting happiness and success: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and His Righteousness."

"The distance is nothing; it is only the first step that counts."

MME. DU DEFFAND.

"Begin; to begin is half the work."

ANSONUS.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

"Lead on, O King Eternal"

"How Gentle God's Commands"

"O Master, Let Me Walk with Thee"

"Onward, Christian Soldiers"

MAKE READY

DEVOTIONAL READING: Ecclesiastes 12:
1-7.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 25: 11-13.

TEXT: "Now is the acceptable time." II
Corinthians 6: 2.

THEME: Making Christ King in youth.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Returning one late afternoon from an engagement in a northern city I learned that our train would reach Washington (my destination) shortly after two o'clock in the morning. Not wishing to spend the night in the sleeper in the station shed I took a seat in the club car. For hours we pounded over the rails. As daylight lost itself in night and thoughts of home kept pressing in upon me, I spent much time in

looking out of the window into the outside darkness. At times the engine shrieked a noisy warning, the click of rail crossings sounded under the wheels and in a moment the signal lights of a station would leap out of the dark. As our train came thus to a stop, I usually noticed a number of locomotives on the siding paralleling our track. Some of these were cold, black hulks, looming powerless and dead in the night. Others were pulsing with life, with steam whistling at the exhaust, smoke puffing now and then from the stack and the fire-box a glow of brilliant red.

Coming into a terminal such as I have described, we were scarcely stopped when the sound of disconnected air brakes could be heard. Almost immediately one of the live locomotives from the siding slid out from its place on to the main track in front of our train. A moment later an unmistakable bump told us that this engine had been attached to our train, and when

the conductor swung his lantern we left the station and drove out into the darkness on the main line, under the power of the new locomotive. Out on the main line, headed toward the capital city with a magnificent train behind it, what a privilege for an engine.

Three times was this repeated. Each time it was an engine in which the fire was burning, the steam straining the gauge, pulsing with life—the engine that was ready—which was chosen. Not once did we stop while some one fired up a dead engine, oiled, and made it ready. The engine given the assignment on the main line was the one that was ready when the moment of service was at hand.

Sailing is one of my favorite pastimes. Every summer I plan for a few weeks on the water in company with a chosen few who love the sport as well as do I. It was under such circumstances that we lifted

anchor one morning in a friendly little cove and turned our nose out into deep water. Our skipper sat for a few moments at the wheel looking over the horizon, then he gave a call bringing all on board to the cockpit.

“Stow all that stuff in the cabin carefully up forward,” he ordered; “One of you see that everything is ship-shape up at the bow. Take two reefs in the sail. See that all the ropes are running free.”

“What’s this all about?” we asked.

Pointing to a fast-racing cloud near the eastern horizon he answered, “We’re in for a blow. Now’s the time to get ready for it. When it comes we shall be too busy taking care of ourselves to think of much else.”

Thus it proved to be. Half an hour had not passed before the wind freshened and soon the scud was running all about us. But with everything battened down snug and tight we headed into the teeth of the

wind. Although the seas washed our decks again and again, we rode it out without a loss of any character.

The story of the foolish virgins as told in Scripture.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. We prepare for life through the building of character.

2. We all dream of some day occupying places of authority and responsibility which call for unimpeachable character.

3. We want to be strong to stand for justice, public and private; for civic, economic and social righteousness.

4. There is but one way to realize these high ambitions—make ready.

5. No life is at its best until Christ is King. Make Him King today.

6. We shall be too busy just a little later. No time to make life ship-shape after the storm of life's battle has started.

7. Youth is the time for preparation.
8. The "blow" is bound to come—temptations cannot be avoided.
9. Build character with Christ as the center NOW.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

- "We March, We March to Victory"
"O Love That Will Not Let Me Go"
"He Leadeth Me, O Blessed Thought"
"Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow"

HOLDING THE COURSE

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 1.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Philippians 3: 8-16.

TEXT: "One thing I do . . . I press on toward the goal . . . of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3: 13-14.

THEME: The value of a Christ-inspired objective.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Travelling from New Orleans to the pan-handle of Texas, my train crossed the Mississippi at Vicksburg. While crossing the river at this point an incident occurred which made a very deep impression upon me. Our train had been safely stowed in two sections on the ferry boat and we had headed into the current, making our way slowly up stream, when, some distance up

the river I saw a great black mass moving down toward us. For some time I studied this, attempting to determine what it could be, without success. After a bit we changed our course and passed within a few hundred yards of the object of interest. Then I discovered it was a mass of drift. In the center was what had been a mighty tree. Caught in its roots and broken branches were indiscriminate bits of refuse picked up on its journey down the river. It was a most dangerous menace to traffic. Covered by the long shadows of twilight or hidden by the darkness of the night, there is no telling what damage it might have done, even to our powerful ferry boat.

As I stood watching it pass down toward the Gulf, I thought of the difference between that useless, dangerous mass of drift, and the boat on which I stood. In my imagination, I asked them both the same question.

"Where are you going?"

The boat replied to me, "My business is to carry this important train from the east to the west bank of the Mississippi. I am on my way to a landing a few miles away where I will push my nose into the wharf so exactly that an engine can come down the track laid there and carry this train off my deck and away on its journey."

The drift had quite another story to tell. "I don't know where I came from, and I'm going to nowhere-in-particular."

"Of what use are you?" I might have asked.

"Oh, I'm of no use. I just drift around as the current draws me. Sometimes I stop for a while along the shore and pick up some more odds and ends, then a wave from a passing boat starts me again and I drift on to another place."

"Have you no purpose whatever?"

"No, I'm only a drifter."

And so the black mass drifted on out of sight. Where to? I do not know. No one cared so long as it kept out of our channel.

The ferry boat, true to its purpose, very shortly nosed up to its landing. An engine came on board and before we knew it, we had left the river far behind.

How different were these two.

The picture Paul paints of the athlete in the race.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Christ has a purpose for every life, great or small.

2. In the realization of that purpose will come happiness, usefulness, honor, and all the best things of life.

3. The wise boy or girl tries to find that purpose, and, putting aside all that conflicts with it, centers all the powers of life that it may be achieved.

4. God has given us the power of de-

cision. We need not drift to the land of nowhere-in-particular.

5. We must be willing to push against the currents of our natural desires and tendencies.

6. The joy of attainment.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Faith of Our Fathers, Living Still”

“Holy Spirit, Truth Divine”

“The Lord Is My Shepherd”

“God is Working His Purpose Out”

FOLLOW THE LEADER

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 98.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 4: 12-20.

TEXT: "Follow me." Matthew 4: 19.

THEME: Making Christ Master.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Taking a short cut, I was about to enter the alley when my attention was attracted to something happening there. A boy jumped over the fence, ducked around a barrel standing near an open gate, shot down the alley toward me, and, as he passed, reached out and hit me a friendly tap on the shoulder. I was pleased at this because I knew this boy and liked him very much. He had not passed when I saw another boy jump the fence, duck around

the barrel, shoot down an alley, and, as he came alongside, he, too, hit me on the shoulder although I did not know him at all. Three other boys came hot on the trail of this one, all doing the same thing. The last of the three was a short, chubby youngster, nearly out of breath. I caught him by the arm and demanded sternly, "What's the idea of you boys running down the alley and hitting me like this?"

"Aw," he replied, "Can't you see anything? We're playing 'Follow the leader.' Whatever he does we have to do. Didn't he hit you?"

Then as an old friend of mine says, "there went me a light up," and I understood. Of course one must do as the leader does.

One of the memories of my childhood days is of a walk through a large woods on a very dark night. I was only a very little

boy and those woods seemed very, very big to me, and filled with all sorts of possible dangers. I grew more and more afraid. At last I could stand it no longer. I called to my father who was half a dozen steps in the lead.

“Oh, Daddy, I’d like to walk right alongside of you. Then I could hold your hand and walk better I think.”

He must have known what was in his small boy’s mind.

“All right,” he said, and he came back to me and reached down for my hand which I eagerly gave him. Thus together we finished the walk.

How different the woods seemed. I was not afraid at all after that. I could actually hear the night birds calling to each other, the frogs croaking their tunes and the leaves rustling gently overhead. I found I could be brave in the dark woods with someone strong and brave beside me, holding my hand.

The story of Gypsy Smith. At sixteen ignorant, illiterate, could neither read nor write his own name; living in a typical gypsy style, heard the call of Jesus. To-day he is loved, honored, revered by millions of men and women and boys and girls on five continents. He followed the Leader.

Thus are men whom the world might never know otherwise made great by their contact with the Great Leader.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Jesus is calling today to boys and girls to follow Him through conscience, through the voices of men and women, through the pages of the Bible.

2. He does not call us to go where He has not been, nor where He will not be with us.

3. It takes courage to follow the Leader. It takes courage to do anything worth while.

4. If the way is hard or dark He will be with us.

5. He multiplies our powers and increases our usefulness.

6. He broadens life in every aspect. Like Him we come to have a world vision and a world interest.

7. Following Jesus we cannot fail.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“O Day of Rest and Gladness”

“All Hail the Power of Jesus’ Name”

“Jesus Calls Us, O’er the Tumult”

“In the Cross of Christ I Glory”

SAVING FOR SERVICE

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 24.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: John 18: 15-18; Acts
3: 11-16.

TEXT: "When they beheld the boldness of Peter and John . . . they marvelled, and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Acts
4: 13

THEME: The transforming and stabilizing power of Christ in the individual life.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Many miracles have been wrought by our engineers. In that splendid southern state bordering the Mississippi on the east, one travels through mile after mile of unclaimed swamp land. On either side

of the railroad right of way, stretching as far as the eye carries, lie those great wastes. One readily imagines that nothing is stable or sound or safe here. This ground would support no weight at all. The telephone poles are not planted in the ground. They are fastened to a triangle of logs resting (or floating) on the surface of the swamp formation. Yet the heavy train on which we ride, speeds along over a perfect road bed, sound and solid.

“How can this be?” we ask ourselves.

It is the miracle of engineering. Into this swamp land they poured thousands of train loads of rock and clay and similar materials. Deep down it sank until it gave body and strength and foundation, and upon this the roadbed was built.

Of late years we have learned much about the care of trees. When a tree develops a spot in its trunk threatening its life, our experts carve this out and fill the

cavity with cement that is strong and true. The tree is saved. Its weakness becomes its strength.

In our capital city one of the beauty spots is the famous Potomac Park, where in the spring time hundreds of thousands of men and women go to see the marvelous cherry blossoms. It was only a few short years ago that this was marsh land, filled with mosquitoes, a breeding place for malaria, and a menace to the health of the city. It was avoided by every one.

Then the government ordered that a sea wall be built, the marsh pumped out and the land reclaimed. Now on a summer's night it is packed by thousands of automobiles parked along its roads or driving through its lanes of trees.

The same land, transformed, reclaimed from repugnance to beauty, from a menacing marsh to a beautiful park.

The Scripture story of Peter, impulsive, uncertain, denying his Lord; transformed to the man of rock, calm courageous, reliable, immovable.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Many folk are in character like the swamp land, they can not be relied upon. They fail us utterly when we seek to depend upon them.

2. They have not the power nor the qualities within themselves to change this. If they are to be different the help must come from without.

3. Jesus is always ready to help such. "Lo, I stand at the door and knock."

4. Jesus transforms lives as in the case of Peter.

5. A life thus stabilized serves others—transformed from a handicap to a help.

6. Upon such lives God may build the King's Highway to Happiness and Honor.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“We Are Come with Joy and Glad-
ness”

“O Jesus, Thou Art Standing”

“Work, for the Night is Coming”

“Hark! the Voice of Jesus Calling”

THE RING IN THE DOOR

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 43.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: I John 1: 5 to 2: 6.

TEXT: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."

I John 1: 9.

THEME: The readiness and power of Christ to forgive our sins.

ILLUSTRATION:

There is a subtle charm to southern England which you cannot escape,—the rolling hills, the far-reaching meadows, the wayside villages, the old taverns and all the rest. Most delightful to me was that part through which the Avon ran its ever-turning course. Of special interest was the sleepy town of Stratford because of its historic lore. Every one visits the

chapel in which the bodies of Shakespeare and those beloved by him lie buried. So did we.

In the porch of this chapel we noticed a huge iron ring, fastened to one of the doors. The ring had nearly worn through its heavy restraining pin. So oddly did this strike us, since it could not possibly have been used to open the door, we made inquiry as to its purpose and learned that years ago it was the law of the realm that when one had committed a crime if he ran to this porch and laid hold of this ring before his pursuers were able to lay hands upon him, he was granted his liberty for thirty-seven days. A crude refuge for those who had done wrong unintentionally, and for those who, having committed a crime, feared its penalty.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. When we reach the age of reason we know what sin is—the deliberate doing of

things we know we should not do, and the failing to do the things we know we should do.

2. We know the devastating influence of sin in our lives and in our best moments we wish to be free from it.

3. We must make the effort for forgiveness. There must be repentance and a desire for forgiveness.

4. Jesus (the "Ring in the door") is always there, but our hearts and hands must reach out for Him (the ring).

5. Sin thus forgiven is not for a few days but forever.

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us." Psalm 103:12.

6. All sin (intentional or unintentional) may be forgiven.

"Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as white as snow." Isaiah 1:18.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“The Son of God Goes Forth to War”

“Yield Not to Temptation”

“Christ for the World We Sing”

“March on, March on, O Ye Soldiers
true”

SOWING TIME

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 119:9-16.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 13:1-9.

TEXT: "He which soweth sparingly shall
reap also sparingly; and he which
soweth bountifully shall reap also
bountifully." II Corinthians 9:6.

THEME: Youth the natural period of
preparation.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

As a boy I was extremely fond of gum drops, the big round fat ones and the little dumpy ones. In fact I cannot remember any other candy that so delighted me and for which I had such an insatiable craving. In spite of this longing, however, it was satisfied only at rare intervals, since we lived in a relatively new section of the

country where there was not much money to be spent for things of this sort. Many times I remember sitting on the porch steps with my elbows on my knees and my head propped up by my hands, looking out into empty space wondering how I might contrive to earn enough money to buy a small sack of gum drops.

One day while in proud possession of some of these delicious morsels, a most happy thought came to me. I had seen my father plant seed in the garden that grew into splendid plants. Again and again I had gone with him to pick strawberries from the strawberry patch, and raspberries from the bushes. And, too, I had often climbed into the tree and eaten cherries from the branches until I could eat no more.

“Why not plant one of my gum drops in the best spot in the garden, water it every day, keep the ground loose all around it, and in a few weeks perhaps, I

can be picking all the gum drops I want from the bush"? I said to myself.

Selecting the very best gum drop in the bag I carried my plan into effect. I found a spot where the dirt was unusually rich and black. Here I most carefully planted my coveted seed. Each day thereafter I watered this spot regularly, early in the morning and after the sun had gone down. As soon as I was out of bed in the morning I would hurry to the garden to see if the sprout had pushed its way up through the soil. Day after day I watched and nursed, but no sprout appeared to gladden my heart. Joyous anticipation gradually gave way to profound disappointment. Hope dimmed. Glorious visions faded. For the first time, the horrible suspicion that it would not grow entered my mind. In deep mental anguish I sought my mother and poured my tale of woe into her sympathetic ear. From her I learned that gum drops do not grow in this man-

ner, that my sowing had been in vain.

"The way to get gum drops, my dear," she said in her comforting manner, "is for my little man to sow seeds of work and from the pennies that come from this, buy his gum drops."

In the early days when the eastern part of what is now the State of Oklahoma was the Indian Territory, there was an old character living near one of the larger towns well known to everybody. He was a good natured but lazy negro, somewhat over fifty years of age, to whom the government had allotted one of the richest pieces of farm land in that section. In spite of the splendid soil of his farm, its natural advantages, its ease of cultivation and its closeness to a ready market, this old negro never raised a worth-while crop in all the years I knew about him. He had a dilapidated one-toothed harrow and a rangy mule with which he did all his work. Each spring he scratched irregular rows

in the top dirt with this harrow, loosening the earth in these particular spots to a depth of perhaps two or three inches. In these shallow furrows he planted the seed of small garden stuff—radishes, onions, lettuce, etc.—none of which required any special attention.

This produce he later sold from house to house to the town folk for a few cents, barely enough to keep him in the necessities of life. Never did he have any money. Never did he raise a crop he could turn into some of the comforts of life. He would not prepare for such a crop and he gathered as he sowed.

In that windy state of Kansas I have some friends who are farmers. How differently from the old negro they farm. In the spring they bring the powerful tractors from the sheds where they have been housed all winter. To these they

couple the huge six- or eight-disked plows. Back and forth across the flat prairie lands these tractors make their way, pulling the plows digging deep into the earth, turning it from the bottom up, many furrows at a time.

But this is not enough. Once the earth is newly turned to the sun it is thoroughly dragged until the heavy clods are broken into bits and the great fields are leveled and made ready for planting.

Then out comes another ingenious machine to scatter the seed wheat far and wide. This machine does the work of a hundred men, with greater accuracy and greater speed.

God, in turn, sends the sunshine and the rain, and finally the days of harvest come. How glorious they are. Wide fields of golden grain that may be transformed into the necessities, the comforts and the luxuries of life. These farmers have their

beautiful homes, their huge barns, their automobiles. Best of all, they lay a surplus away in the bank for old age.

Bountifully they plant, diligently they labor, and their harvest is correspondingly satisfying.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. We cannot harvest what we do not plant.

2. Like produces like, in nature and in life.

3. In youth God gives us receptive and retentive minds.

4. The heights to which we may rise in age are measured by the preparation we make in youth.

5. Seeds of friendship sown in youth bear fruitage through all the years for good or evil.

6. Seeds of character, honesty, integrity, truthfulness, sincerity, etc., bring a priceless harvest.

7. Hard to uproot weeds of character—
better never let them take root.

8. We must be careful what is sown in
youth for we must harvest in age.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Lord, Speak to Me that I May
Speak”

“Brightly Gleams Our Banner”

“Dare to be Brave, Dare to be True”

“Awake, My Soul, Stretch Every
Nerve”

STRONGHOLDS

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 31:1-8,
21-24.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: II Corinthians 12:9-
10.

TEXT: "Thou art my stronghold." Psalm
31:4.

THEME: Our need of God's strength in
our lives.

ILLUSTRATION:

Many times the beauty of nature, in its varied forms, has held me speechlessly entranced, both in America and in the Old World, but in all the spots where my wanderings have carried me, nothing has so fired my imagination as have the castles on the Rhine. It would not matter how many times I took the trip on the river steamer from Mayence to Cologne, or from Coblenz to Mayence, I should never

grow weary of feasting my eyes on the enchanting scenery of the Rhine country. The wooded hills, the terraced vineyards stretching away for miles, the gaunt, rocky cliffs, each in turn makes its irresistible appeal. And, best of all, are the castles topping the hills in commanding array. Most of these are in ruins barely hinting of their former strength and grandeur, yet, in their ruins, they are the dominant note of the landscape.

There is the Mouse Tower, around which a hundred stories cling,—stories of its use as a signal tower, as a stronghold for artillery, as the headquarters for the collection of the ancient customs. Most interesting of these tales is the legend told with hushed breath of the Bishop of Mayence who was there devoured alive by mice because of his hard-hearted treatment of the good folk of the country-side who were subject to him.

Castle Rheinstein standing boldly on

the steep rock rising almost perpendicularly from the river's edge is, at present, probably the most charming of all.

However, the one I most admire, and about which I am eager to tell you, is the great old fortress of Rheinfels, the most magnificent ruin on the Rhine today. It was built in 1255, high above what is now the little town of St. Goar, on the crest of a commanding hill. The very year it was built, it was besieged by a huge army drawn from sixty of the Rhine cities. The siege lasted a year and fourteen weeks. In the end, the besieging army gave up in despair and withdrew. After this for four hundred and fifty years the knights in this grim castle ruled the surrounding country unmolested. The records tell of many bold exploits during these years.

A formidable French army under the leadership of the gallant General Tallard laid siege to the fortress in 1692. For four

weeks this great army of 17,000 men battled with all their fierce power, but it was useless, and after losing more than 4,000 of their number they, too, were driven off.

For nearly a hundred years thereafter Castle Rheinfels again continued in unchallenged control of the rich vineyards and farm lands.

Then it was captured. But the story of its capture is one of base treachery. The Marquis de Castries, a French officer, with an army of brave men marched against the fortress. Before they had gone into battle, before the soldiers of the garrison of the fortress had a chance to defend themselves, a member of that garrison—one who had many times enjoyed the shelter of the castle in hours of danger—treacherously betrayed the path by which a secret entrance to the fortress might be gained. Following this false-hearted guide, the enemy entered the stronghold and almost

without a blow put the defenders to rout.

So long as those within the walls were true to their trust no enemy for five hundred years had been able to do Castle Rheinfels real harm. When one of its garrison proved faithless the noble fortress was lost forever to its foes.

Later it was demolished by the French. Today it stands a mass of ruins, made such through betrayal from within.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Life is a battle of right against wrong, good against evil, in our own hearts and in our relationships with others about us.

2. Very early we learn we cannot depend upon our own strength in facing these battles.

3. In our struggle against temptation we will find it is the traitor in our own heart who betrays us.

4. No matter how fine and beautiful the

fortress of our life may be; no matter how elevated in the eyes of the world, a treacherous habit, a false quality may open the avenue for deadly attack, until at last nothing is left but the ruins of what might have been.

5. The ability to withstand and always be true must come from some Power stronger than ourselves.

6. Our Saviour knows what the battle against temptation means.

“He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted.”

7. God is our refuge and our strength. In His strength the fortress of life will stand against all enemies, without and within.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“God is My Strong Salvation”

“O Lord of Life and Love and Power”

“O God our Help in Ages Past”

“Forward! Be our Watchword”

THE IMPORTANT STONE

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 118:14-29.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Romans 12.

TEXT: "Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant." Matthew 20:27.

THEME: Greatness in life is measured in terms of service.

ILLUSTRATION:

Early one morning, just as the sun was climbing out of the east, and the birds and the flowers were waking and rubbing their eyes, a handsomely carved stone in the cornice of a stately building saw its shadow and was extremely proud of its position in the world. Stretching itself to its full height, and looking with condescension upon the other stones in the building be-

low, it said, in a tone loud enough to be heard by almost any of the other stones that might be listening:

“How fortunate this building is to have me here in this cornice. They could not get along without me. With my beautifully carved face I rightfully occupy the most important spot there is. How glad I am that I am not that door-stone way down at the street.”

It might have continued to say much more, but the door-stone, just then getting its morning bath, had some soap in its eye and was, therefore, very cross. He interrupted very angrily:

“You need not try to be so high and mighty! We can easily get along without your beautiful and useless face around here. As a matter of fact, you do no work at all. I never could imagine how you came to be put into the building. As for me, it is entirely different. My position is of the utmost importance. I am indispens-

able. Every day I help thousands of people to step from the street to the lobby where they may transact their business."

"Stuff and nonsense," creaked the great front door, terribly annoyed at being disturbed so early in the morning, for it had worked late the night before, "What good would either of you be were it not for me? If I did not work this building could not be entered. Neither of you can fill my place. I dominate the situation. Were it not that I am of the greatest importance why should such unlimited authority have been placed in my hands?"

At this all the windows began to laugh with derision, and to wink at each other knowingly.

"How many folk do you think would want to swing your squeaky, old, cranky hinges and enter the building were it not for us? We let the sunlight and the soft breezes into the rooms and the great lobby. Just the other day a man in one of the

rooms, who could not get one of us open, sent for the janitor and told him that unless he could have good windows he would go to a building where he could. He knew what is important in a building."

"What a lot of talk about nothing," snapped the corner stone of the building, "You all talk like silly children. You windows think altogether too much of yourselves. Some days your faces shine so much I can't stand to look at you. And, the other day when it rained and hailed, five of you were all broken up. No one can depend on you. Listen to me, now! I can settle this dispute promptly. I am the important stone in this handsome building. They chiseled the name of the building and the year of its erection on my face and within me they deposited a number of unusually important documents."

Just then a heavy bass voice from deep in the ground was heard:

“What would you do if I were to roll over and cease carrying you on my back?” It was the foundation stone speaking. “You could not have a building without me. I support you all and when I grow tired and throw you off my shoulders it will be the end of all of you. If you really wish to know who is necessary here, look at me.”

A little owl who had been sitting with his father on the branch of a tree nearby had been listening intently to all this conversation. He was totally confused by all that had been said, so, like a wise little bird, he asked his father as to which was right in his claim.

“They are all right, and they are all wrong,” answered the wise old owl. “To have a handsome, strong building, you must have a strong foundation, straight walls, a wide door-step, heavy doors, many large windows and a beautiful cornice. No fine building is erected without a cor-

ner stone. So they are all right. But they are all wrong, because the foundation is nothing by itself, neither is the cornice, nor the door, nor the windows. The thing they have forgotten is that it takes them all to make the building and they are only great in the degree to which they help to make the building great. They become great by giving of their usefulness to the rest of the building. None of them can do the work of the other. Each has a particular place to fill. If he fills that place he need never worry about anything else."

"My! how wise you are, daddy," said the little owl, as he closed his eyes sleepily, for by this time the sun was really very high in the sky.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. The ambition to achieve something worth-while is God-given.
2. Without such ambition civilization with its comforts, its safeguards of human

life and health, and its provisions for human happiness would disintegrate.

3. No two of us are endowed with exactly the same physical, intellectual or spiritual powers.

4. Greatness is not in being what someone else is, but in being ourselves in a great fashion.

5. Greatness is not in being conspicuously placed, but in filling perfectly whatever place is ours.

6. Greatness is not in receiving, but in giving.

7. Selfishness destroys—service makes immortal.

“That man may last, but never lives,
Who much receives, but nothing gives.”

THOMAS GIBBONS.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Rise up, O Men of God”

“Work, for the Night is Coming”

“Brightly Beams our Father’s Mercy”

“Hark! The Voice of Jesus Calling”

PARTNERS WITH GOD

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 121.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: I Corinthians 3:6–15.

TEXT: “We are workers together with God.” II Corinthians 6:1.

THEME: Our opportunity to share with God in making the world a better place in which to live.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

“Give me five gallons of gas, please,” says the average motorist, as he draws up beside the pump in a filling station. When his order is filled he drives away without so much as one wee, little thought as to where the motor fuel came from.

Such men have never seen an oil well shot, nor known the anxiety constantly

hanging over the days of drilling. They do not know the romance of the prospector. It is a field of adventure so fascinating that while some have been made millionaires by oil, many thousands have been made paupers through speculation in its rainbow promises. Always men are pushing into new areas of possibility. If anyone were to describe to you an operation such as occurred when the rich Oklahoma fields were opened, it would run something like this:

For a host of real or imaginary reasons a group of men come to believe that oil is to be found in a given locality. As soon as leases can be secured from the owners of the land the prospectors make their appearance with a string of tools. A wooden derrick, thirty or forty feet in height, is erected (if oil is actually found a forest of these derricks soon dots the landscape) a boiler and a steam engine are installed nearby, and, almost over night

the feverish drilling begins. As the drill passes through the various strata of sand, rock, shale or clay, samples of these, brought to the surface, are examined many times a day. Sometimes the drillers strike the stratum they are seeking at the depth of a few hundred feet, sometimes at fifteen or sixteen hundred feet, or again at thirty-five hundred feet. Of course while drilling many accidents may happen. The well may cave in before the casing has been properly fitted, the tools may be lost, or a host of other serious mishaps occur. However, if all is well, one day the foreman, as he picks up a handful of the sample brought to the surface, will say:

“We’ve struck the oil sand!”

Right then the real excitement begins. Even old-timers like to be around when this happens. With the utmost care they continue to drill until they feel a sufficient depth in the oil sand has been reached. The tools are then withdrawn and prepa-

rations are made for shooting the well. Specially prepared tubes each containing many gallons of nitroglycerine are lowered to the bottom, and when all is in readiness this huge charge is exploded. There is, at first, a slight rumble, a faint bluish smoke appears for a moment at the mouth of the well, followed immediately by a tremendous roar as a black column bursts from the earth, rising higher and higher until the derrick is lost from sight.

Next day the newspapers carry the news, "A new well brought in."

It is a most interesting story of man working with God, one that grips and thrills you, the more you know of it. For centuries Nature, operating in accordance with the laws of God, busily prepared the great deposits of oil in the earth. One day man learned how to coöperate. The result of this partnership is seen, in part, in the thousands of service stations crowding our city corners. In this, as in many other in-

stances, God was unable to give this blessing to the world until man entered into partnership with Him.

One of God's fine, splendid partners is a doctor whose friendship I prize most highly.

Once upon a time, as all good stories go, this doctor was calling at a home where the husband and father was desperately ill. As he was leaving he drew the wife one side and said to her:

"There is only one thing that will pull your husband through this crisis. He must have a special diet of nourishing food. You must prepare some chicken broth for him."

With this seemingly simple instruction he left the house. The wife stood looking hopelessly after him. To her this was a moment of utter despair. The doctor had ordered chicken as the only possible means of recovery for her husband and the father

of her boys and girls. But they could not buy a chicken. Their money and credit were exhausted. The long illness of the husband had stopped all income and eaten up all reserve.

That was a most unhappy night for that heavy-hearted wife. She could see no way out of this dreadful situation. The next morning she had occasion to go to the back porch. Glancing by chance toward their old chicken yard she gasped with astonishment, for to her utter amazement she saw a white hen, seemingly perfectly at home, walking about in that chicken yard. The door of the yard was closed and fastened, there were no holes in the wire netting. None of the neighbors knew anything about the hen. They disclaimed all ownership.

So the sick husband had his chicken broth. Three or four days later when the broth was gone and the brave wife was again faced by the same situation another

white hen was found walking about in the yard.

How did it happen? No one ever told me, but, listen while I whisper. I know that big-hearted doctor who ordered the broth given to his patient had a chicken yard of his own and it was filled with white hens.

That doctor is truly a partner with God.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. God has filled the world with treasures of gold and silver and hidden power that awaits man's hand to liberate it.

2. God's laws are constant and beneficial.

3. When man shares with God in interpreting these laws they bless all mankind.

4. Jesus came to interpret God's love in words and deeds.

5. As we live like Jesus we too may do this.

6. He has no hands, or feet, or tongues but ours.

7. Our lips must speak the kind words, the thoughtful, helpful, encouraging words He would like to have said.

8. Our hands must lighten the burdens, do the deeds of mercy.

9. God needs partners if He is to carry out His full purposes.

10. You may be one of these partners—if you choose.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Jesus, Thou Divine Companion”

“Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus”

“Rescue the Perishing, Care for the Dying”

“March on, March on, O ye Soldiers True”

GOD'S CARE

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 91.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Luke 11:1-13.

TEXT: "Like as a father." Psalm 103:13.

THEME: God's personal interest in the individual welfare of His children.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

The night was fearfully dark—especially so for a very small boy. It had been raining all through the evening. In company with a dozen others, my mother and I were driving in a four-horse bus over a stretch of country road. It was spring time and the roads had been newly "worked," which means that the dirt from the sides had been heaped in the center of the highway causing the road to slope abruptly in both directions. The rain had

transformed the great ditches on either side into roaring rivers.

As is usually the case the driver found it utterly impossible to keep the bus on the crest of the road. Again and again it slid off the ridge, the rear wheels slipping on the wet clay to the very edge of the deadly ditches, the bus tipping dangerously all the while. At times it seemed as though nothing could prevent our being hurled into that deep, dark, angry water. I was afraid and cuddled as close to my mother as I could. Of course she was more conscious of the dangers of the situation than I, yet she seemed unafraid. Although I could not understand how she could be so brave her composure helped me a great deal. I whispered to her:

“I’m afraid. What are we going to do?”

Her grip on my hand tightened a bit and she answered:

“It will be all right. God will take care of us.”

He did. Soon we were safely at our destination.

All through the years since then my mother's answer in this trying hour has helped me as other times of darkness have come when everything seemed to be slipping. God cares.

Another, but a very different sort of picture, hangs on the walls of my boyhood memories.

For some days I had been without an appetite. I had not cared to play, much less to work. At the time of this incident I was lying around the house, having refused to join my brothers at play. I saw my father approach the family medicine chest and immediately something told me I had made a mistake in declining my brothers' invitation. After all they would be missing me, I thought. With this or something else in mind I started quietly for the door, making as little noise as

possible, not wishing to disturb anyone. But I did not reach that door. My father called to me:

“Come here, son, I want to see you.”

In his hand was the big bottle of brown medicine. How well I knew that bottle. For a moment I thought I might fail to hear the call, but there was something about his general appearance which I caught out of the corner of my eye that told me it would be better to hear. So I reluctantly returned.

With my best persuasion I sought to assure my father that my health was much improved, that there was no need for any medicine. He apparently did not hear me. The big spoon came out. The nasty brown dose filled it generously. As a last resort I closed my eyes and my mouth tightly. Even this did not work however, for my father held my nose just as tightly and before I knew it the medicine was swallowed.

Never until my own boy came to gladden my home, did I realize that this was an evidence of my father's love. I did not want the medicine, but I needed it.

Did you ever sit on a train as, swinging around a curve, it headed directly toward the sheer wall of a mountain side? Did the thought ever flash through your brain:

"We shall all be killed when the engine crashes into the rocky wall!"

Probably not, because you have said to yourself:

"The tracks would not lead this way unless there was a way through. The engineer who is driving the train knows every foot of the roadbed. It is his business to take care of the train."

You entered the dark, black tunnel without fear because you trusted the train crew to carry you through to the light on the other side. So may we trust our

Father when we cannot see the way, or when it grows dark and black.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. God cares for you.
2. No night is so dark He cannot protect you; no problem is so great that He cannot help you.
3. You can trust your future to Him. Your part is to do your best each day.
4. It is our Father's business to keep the old world on the track. We can leave that big task to him, even if we cannot understand.
5. Our Father knows when we need something to tone us up.
6. Like the brown medicine it may be something we do not want, disappointment, hardship, loss, etc., but like our earthly father, His hand acts in love.
7. God's love never changes.

"No night so wild but brings the constant sun
With love and power untold ;

No time so dark but through its woof there
run

Some blessed threads of gold.”

CROUCH.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“Saviour, Like a Shepherd Lead Us”

“God Will Take Care of You”

“I’ve Found a Friend, O Such a
Friend”

“Saviour, Thy Dying Love”

STAINED GLASS WINDOWS

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 8.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Mark 9:2-8.

TEXT: "But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." I Peter 2:9.

THEME: The spirit of Christ illumines our lives, making all beautiful.

ILLUSTRATION:

We can never be grateful enough to those who first gave to the world the idea of stained glass windows. Wherever they are appropriately used, such windows add quiet dignity and restfulness of tone to the atmosphere, as well as contributing mate-

rially to the beauty of the surroundings.

Once you have seen the early Gothic windows of the stately cathedral of Chartres, or the great circular windows so justly famous in Notre Dame, they live forever in your memory. And, perhaps, without exaggeration, this is doubly true of the windows of the rarely beautiful Chapel of Sainte Chapelle.

I should very much like to take you as a party to this latter chapel. It stands in the very heart of the several wings of the Palais de Justice on the Ile de le Cité around which the Seine divides and joins again. (The island upon which the original city of Paris stood.) Like so many other worth-while places, we must go out of our way if we would visit it—through a narrow arched corridor, out into an open court, around a corner, and there we find the entrance.

It was built by St. Louis to receive and house the precious relics brought back by

him to Paris, from his crusade to the Holy Land. Thus, while it is not large, the chapel represents the finest labors of artist and artisan.

First we enter the lower chapel, heavy in its architecture, rather dark and not particularly inviting.

In either corner we find a flight of winding stone steps deeply worn by many feet, leading to the second floor. Mounting these, we come to the upper chapel. The room is bare of all furniture, the altar has been removed, yet we do not seem to notice this. So perfect are the proportions, so masterful is the design, so unusual the architecture, that we are wholly satisfied to see it as it is. Chiefly are we thrilled by its many windows, sixty feet or more in height, so closely set together as to awaken our amazement that the marble columns between are capable of supporting the weight of the superstructure.

The windows are composed of countless

small pieces of stained glass, of varying shades and colors. From the exterior of the chapel they all look alike, a monotone of grayish blue—nothing at all to stir our imagination or our emotions. But inside, after we have closed the great doors leading to the balcony, and the sun has pushed the clouds away from before its face, it is unbelievably different. We stand in wondering awe. The windows, so colorless from without, so drab in the darkness, live and sparkle and scintillate. Like a million priceless jewels they flash before our bewildered eyes. With every changing sunbeam they gather new charm. And, strangely enough, the glass of darker hue gives to the picture a richness and tone for the lighter bits of exquisite radiance.

The chapel of Sainte Chapelle is transcendently lovely when man's handiwork is thus transformed by the touch of God's glorious sunlight.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. Every life is made up of a variety of days.

2. Some of these days are bright and happy, some dark and gloomy, some brilliant and successful, some dull and disappointing.

3. All together they make life.

4. These days seem very sketchy and meaningless when considered individually.

5. When the light of the radiant love of Jesus shines through our days they become beautiful.

6. The Christ-filled life attracts everyone.

7. It cheers others.

8. It comforts the downcast.

9. Even the sorrows and dark moments of a Christ-filled life serve to make the completed picture of that life more beautiful, more irresistible.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“I Love to Tell the Story”

“Immortal Love, Forever Full”

“Looking Upward Every Day”

“Fairest Lord Jesus”

THE CONQUEROR

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 33:1-12.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Joshua 1:1-9.

TEXT: "He that ruleth his spirit is better
than he that taketh a city." Proverbs
16:32.

THEME: The kingliness of self control.

ILLUSTRATION:

Regardless of its source, the quality of true courage demands recognition and respect from the people of every nation. It is a cardinal quality of character which overcomes racial prejudice and causes men of one blood to pay whole-hearted, sincere tribute to those of another. At the shrine of simple courage, and unfaltering fidelity, men and women of every tongue stand together in silence.

Little Switzerland, the fatherland of William Tell—famous in song and story the legend—is rarely rich in such shrines. The mountains themselves, losing their heads in the passing clouds, seem to stand as enduring monuments to the hardihood, the integrity and the wholesomeness of these Alpine folk, whose very name has for centuries been synonymous with resolute valor. Every city and hillside village boasts its statues in bronze and marble, erected to commemorate the splendid heritage of daring deeds bequeathed by former townsmen to those now living. Best known of all and probably the memorial that stirs the hearts of those from afar the deepest is the never-to-be-forgotten Lion of Lucerne.

Climbing the mountainside above the charming old town of Lucerne, in the shadow of Rigi and Pilatus, we reach our destination, ground made holy by the memory of the magnificent sacrifice of

those whose death is here immortalized in living rock. A crystal pool a few feet in width lies between us and the wall of rock in which is the grotto containing the figure of the dying lion. We could easily believe this pool was made by the tears of those who are privileged to look upon this striking memorial, for as we gaze at this noble beast, wounded to the death by the broken spear in his side, our deepest emotions are stirred. His great head rests on the outstretched paw which seemingly seeks to defend the shield bearing the fleur-de-lis of France. The shield bearing the cross of Switzerland stands apart uninjured.

Engraved in the rock beneath the grotto is an inscription reciting the fact that this monument was erected to the memory of the Swiss Guard who to the last man were killed in the gardens and the palace of the Tuileries in their lion-hearted defence of Louis XVI and the royal family against the infuriated mob of Paris.

Small wonder our hearts well up within us. How could it be otherwise, as we thus recall the gallant bravery of that detachment of guards standing between the King of France and the teeming thousands of his own subjects crying for his life. We can almost see these fearless men as they took their hopeless stand at the strategic points in the grounds and within the palace. One after another these groups were swallowed up by the surging tide of death. At the grand staircase the remnant (eighty men) gathered. Without commander, without ammunition, they stood against the frenzied hordes who crushed from without. Here they laid their lives unhesitatingly on the altar of supreme devotion to duty. They died rather than betray their trust.

As long as time lasts, each succeeding generation the world over will teach its children to stand with uncovered and bowed heads in tribute to these men.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. The world pays its highest honors to those who achieve, who overcome tremendous obstacles or who give their all in valiant endeavor.

2. The greatest battle ever known is the battle of life.

3. The greatest conquest ever known is the conquest of self.

4. To control others we must first learn to control self.

5. Masters of men must be masters of self.

6. Self control makes a man master of any situation.

7. It endows him with the kingly qualities of dignity, balance, poise, moderation and an immeasurable reserve strength.

8. It demands the confidence, respect and honor of others.

9. Every self-controlled man is an uncrowned king in the realm of things worth while.

10. The boy or girl who walks and talks with God learns the lesson of self control,

A. In His Book.

B. In communion with Him (prayer).

C. In fellowship with His children.

“Most powerful is he who has himself in his power.”

SENECA.

“Self reverence, self knowledge, self control,
These three alone lead life to sovereign power.”

TENNYSON.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:

“He Leadeth Me, O Blessed Thought”

“Marching with the Heroes”

“A Mighty Fortress Is Our God”

“Fling Out the Banner, Let It Float”

FRONT YARD FOLK

DEVOTIONAL READING: Psalm 19.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Matthew 23: 13-28.

TEXT: "Blessed is the man . . . in whose spirit there is no guile." Psalm 32: 2.

THEME: The primary virtue of simple sincerity.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

A matter of business necessitated my visiting a friend in one of the great office buildings of an eastern city some days ago. This building was a most pretentious structure. Its facing was of white marble which glistened in the sunlight and gave at once a subtle feeling of stability and wealth. The lobby I found to be marble floored. Handsome murals, the work of nationally known artists, were in the wide

panels of the walls. A battery of swift, electric elevators operated by uniformed starters handled the constant flow of people, in and out, with noiseless dispatch.

Taking one of these elevators, I was soon discharged at my floor and made my way to my friend's office. As we shook hands I congratulated him on having used such wisdom in the selection of a building in which to locate his headquarters. He seemed pleased and, as he led me to a private room, said something about the nice accommodations. Excusing himself he left me for a few moments while he cared for another matter of business, asking me to make myself at home.

This I did and crossed to the window to spend the time looking about until he should return. What a surprise was mine. I could scarcely believe this was the building I had entered a few seconds before. The marble wall was gone. I looked out upon a rusty, unkept brick wall. Below

was a mass of tangled wires, a catch-all for old rags and similar trash. And this was but suggestive of the court yard next attracting my eye, still farther below. It was unspeakably filthy. Great cans of refuse leaned against each other; piles of rubbish filled the corners. Everywhere was shrieking evidence of slovenly carelessness.

Down, down went that office building in my esteem. It had been built with a show front, a character that did not carry through. It would not stand close inspection. If you looked only at its face you would be most favorably impressed, but having seen the court side, you seriously questioned the genuineness of the entire structure.

Entirely at variance with this was an experience I had while roaming through the historic old streets of New Orleans. In company with an entertaining compan-

ion I was strolling about, delighting my heart in the quaint beauty of this portion of that picturesque city of our Southland, when we neared a very plain building. There was nothing at all prepossessing about the place—straight, unornamented walls, the windows hung with substantial wooden shutters, simplicity written in every particular. Notwithstanding all this, my friend caught my arm and said:

“I think you would enjoy stopping here for a bit. Suppose we go in.”

Of course I agreed to follow his suggestion although not greatly impressed.

We entered a modestly arched corridor, perhaps forty feet in length, leading us directly through the house. Never shall I forget my delightful surprise when we reached the end of that corridor.

It led into the most alluring patio I have ever seen. Old trees perfectly kept; a bubbling, gurgling fountain; a bit of a pool; velvet-like grass; inviting benches;

gorgeously plumed birds on lofty perches; a soft, gentle breeze; restfulness and beauty in lavish abandon.

Long since the plain front of that old house, the simple architecture, has been forgotten, but the beauty of the garden will always remain one of the joyously enduring pictures in memory's gallery.

DEDUCTIONS:

1. No folk more unreliable or disappointing as friends are to be found than Front Yard Folk.

2. Nothing is more meaningless than Front Yard Christianity.

3. Jesus constantly emphasized the need of a true heart life.

4. His most bitter denunciations were directed toward smug, complacent Front Yard Folk.

5. Counterfeit money is worthless, so is a counterfeit life.

6. How much more desirable is the life

in which there is no guile—the patio life—the more you see of it, the more it holds you.

7. Simple sincerity is a priceless asset to any life.

8. Sooner or later private virtue or private vice becomes public.

“I should say sincerity, a deep, great, genuine sincerity, is the first characteristic of all men in any way heroic.”

CARLYLE.

SUGGESTED HYMNS:


“True-hearted, Whole-hearted Faithful
and Loyal”

“Who Is on the Lord’s Side”

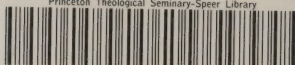
“Take My Life and Let It be”

“Sing Them Over Again To Me”

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Mr 9 '38			
My 6 '38			
My 25 '38			
Mr 4 '40			
Ap 6 '43			
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